



June 28, 2019

MR. JASON LEOPOLD

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FOIPA Request No.: 1193607-000
Subject: KHAN, SAMIR

Dear Mr. Leopold:

The enclosed documents were reviewed under the Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts (FOIPA), Title 5, United States Code, Section 552/552a. Below you will find check boxes under the appropriate statute headings which indicate the types of exemptions asserted to protect information which is exempt from disclosure. The appropriate exemptions are noted on the enclosed pages next to redacted information. In addition, a deleted page information sheet was inserted to indicate where pages were withheld entirely and identify which exemptions were applied. The checked exemption boxes used to withhold information are further explained in the enclosed Explanation of Exemptions.

Section 552

☒ (b)(1)

☐ (b)(2)

☒ (b)(3)

50 USC 3024(i)(1)

Fed. R. Crim. P. 6(e)

☐ (b)(4)

☒ (b)(5)

☒ (b)(6)

☒ (b)(7)(A)

☐ (b)(7)(B)

☒ (b)(7)(C)

☒ (b)(7)(D)

☒ (b)(7)(E)

☐ (b)(7)(F)

☐ (b)(8)

☐ (b)(9)

Section 552a

☐ (d)(5)

☐ (j)(2)

☐ (k)(1)

☐ (k)(2)

☐ (k)(3)

☐ (k)(4)

☐ (k)(5)

☐ (k)(6)

☐ (k)(7)

1508 pages were reviewed and 535 pages are being released.

Please see the paragraphs below for relevant information specific to your request as well as the enclosed FBI FOIPA Addendum for standard responses applicable to all requests.

- ☒ Documents were located which originated with, or contained information concerning, other Government Agencies [OGA].
- ☒ This information has been referred to the OGA(s) for review and direct response to you.
- ☒ We are consulting with another agency. The FBI will correspond with you regarding this information when the consultation is completed.

Please refer to the enclosed FBI FOIPA Addendum for additional standard responses applicable to your request. **"Part 1"** of the Addendum includes standard responses that apply to all requests. **"Part 2"** includes additional standard responses that apply to all requests for records on individuals. **"Part 3"** includes general information about FBI records that you may find useful. Also enclosed is our Explanation of Exemptions.

For questions regarding our determinations, visit the www.fbi.gov/foia website under "Contact Us." The FOIPA Request Number listed above has been assigned to your request. Please use this number in all correspondence concerning your request.

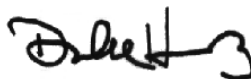
You may file an appeal by writing to the Director, Office of Information Policy (OIP), United States Department of Justice, Suite 11050, 1425 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20530-0001, or you may submit an appeal through OIP's FOIA online portal by creating an account on the following website: <https://www.foiaonline.gov/foiaonline/action/public/home>. Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within ninety (90) days from the date of this letter in order to be considered timely. If you submit your appeal by mail, both the letter and the envelope should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." Please cite the FOIPA Request Number assigned to your request so it may be easily identified.

You may seek dispute resolution services by contacting the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at 877-684-6448, or by emailing ogis@nara.gov. Alternatively, you may contact the FBI's FOIA Public Liaison by emailing foipaquestions@fbi.gov. If you submit your dispute resolution correspondence by email, the subject heading should clearly state "Dispute Resolution Services." Please also cite the FOIPA Request Number assigned to your request so it may be easily identified.



See additional information which follows.

Sincerely,



David M. Hardy
Section Chief
Record/Information
Dissemination Section
Information Management Division

Enclosures

The enclosed documents represent the fourteenth interim release of information responsive to your Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts (FOIPA) request.

Inquiries regarding your OGA referrals may be directed to the following agencies at:

Dr. James V.M.L. Holzer
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
The Privacy Office
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
STOP-0655
Washington, D.C. 20528-0655

U.S. Army Special Operations Command
USASOC (AOIM/FOIA)
2929 Desert Storm Drive (Stop A)
Fort Bragg, NC 28310-9110

To minimize costs to both you and the FBI, duplicate copies of the same document were not processed.

Upon receipt of the enclosed Compact Disc (CD), please go to www.pay.gov to make an electronic payment* in the amount of \$15.00, or make a check or money order payable to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and mail it to the Work Process Unit, Record/Information Dissemination Section, Information Management Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 170 Marcel Drive, Winchester, VA 22602. Please include the FOIPA Request Number with your payment. Failure to pay for this release within thirty (30) days from the date of this letter will close any pending FBI FOIPA requests from you. Nonpayment will also cause an automatic denial of any future FOIPA requests.

**Pay.gov is a secure web-based application that accepts credit card and ACH payments online, and is hosted by the United States Department of Treasury, Financial Management Service. For frequent FOIPA requesters, it is recommended to create a Pay.gov account to retain an online history of payments made through Pay.gov and to retain specific information for future payments. To make an electronic payment, complete the FBI Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Form located on Pay.gov. Please note: if a refund is necessary, there is less processing time to refund a credit card payment than an ACH payment.*

FBI FOIPA Addendum

As referenced in our letter responding to your Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts (FOIPA) request, the FBI FOIPA Addendum includes information applicable to your request. Part 1 of the Addendum includes standard responses that apply to all requests. Part 2 includes additional standard responses that apply to all requests for records on individuals. Part 3 includes general information about FBI records. For questions regarding Parts 1, 2, or 3, visit the www.fbi.gov/foia website under "Contact Us." Previously mentioned appeal and dispute resolution services are also available at the web address.

Part 1: The standard responses below apply to all requests:

- (i) **5 U.S.C. § 552(c).** Congress excluded three categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of the FOIA [5 U.S.C. § 552(c) (2006 & Supp. IV (2010))]. FBI responses are limited to those records subject to the requirements of the FOIA. Additional information about the FBI and the FOIPA can be found on the www.fbi.gov/foia website.
- (ii) **National Security/Intelligence Records.** The FBI can neither confirm nor deny the existence of national security and foreign intelligence records pursuant to FOIA exemptions (b)(1), (b)(3), and PA exemption (j)(2) as applicable to requests for records about individuals [5 U.S.C. §§ 552/552a (b)(1), (b)(3), and (j)(2); 50 U.S.C § 3024(i)(1)]. The mere acknowledgment of the existence or nonexistence of such records is itself a classified fact protected by FOIA exemption (b)(1) and/or would reveal intelligence sources, methods, or activities protected by exemption (b)(3) [50 USC § 3024(i)(1)]. This is a standard response and should not be read to indicate that national security or foreign intelligence records do or do not exist.

Part 2: The standard responses below apply to all requests for records on individuals:

- (i) **Requests for Records about any Individual—Watch Lists.** The FBI can neither confirm nor deny the existence of any individual's name on a watch list pursuant to FOIA exemption (b)(7)(E) and PA exemption (j)(2) [5 U.S.C. §§ 552/552a (b)(7)(E), (j)(2)]. This is a standard response and should not be read to indicate that watch list records do or do not exist.
- (ii) **Requests for Records for Incarcerated Individuals.** The FBI can neither confirm nor deny the existence of records which could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any incarcerated individual pursuant to FOIA exemptions (b)(7)(E), (b)(7)(F), and PA exemption (j)(2) [5 U.S.C. §§ 552/552a (b)(7)(E), (b)(7)(F), and (j)(2)]. This is a standard response and should not be read to indicate that such records do or do not exist.

Part 3: General Information:

- (i) **Record Searches.** The Record/Information Dissemination Section (RIDS) searches for reasonably described records by searching those systems or locations where responsive records would reasonably be found. Most requests are satisfied by searching the Central Records System (CRS), an extensive system of records consisting of applicant, investigative, intelligence, personnel, administrative, and general files compiled and maintained by the FBI in the course of fulfilling its dual law enforcement and intelligence mission as well as the performance of agency administrative and personnel functions. The CRS spans the entire FBI organization and encompasses the records of FBI Headquarters (FBIHQ), FBI Field Offices, and FBI Legal Attaché Offices (Legats) worldwide. A CRS search includes Electronic Surveillance (ELSUR) records.
- (ii) **FBI Records.** Founded in 1908, the FBI carries out a dual law enforcement and national security mission. As part of this dual mission, the FBI creates and maintains records on various subjects; however, the FBI does not maintain records on every person, subject, or entity.
- (iii) **Requests for Criminal History Records or Rap Sheets.** The Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division provides Identity History Summary Checks – often referred to as a criminal history record or rap sheets. These criminal history records are not the same as material in an investigative "FBI file." An Identity History Summary Check is a listing of information taken from fingerprint cards and documents submitted to the FBI in connection with arrests, federal employment, naturalization, or military service. For a fee, individuals can request a copy of their Identity History Summary Check. Forms and directions can be accessed at www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks. Additionally, requests can be submitted electronically at www.edo.cjis.gov. For additional information, please contact CJIS directly at (304) 625-5590.
- (iv) **The National Name Check Program (NNCP).** The mission of NNCP is to analyze and report information in response to name check requests received from federal agencies, for the purpose of protecting the United States from foreign and domestic threats to national security. Please be advised that this is a service provided to other federal agencies. Private citizens cannot request a name check.

EXPLANATION OF EXEMPTIONS

SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552

- (b)(1) (A) specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and (B) are in fact properly classified to such Executive order;
- (b)(2) related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency;
- (b)(3) specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than section 552b of this title), provided that such statute (A) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on issue, or (B) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;
- (b)(4) trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;
- (b)(5) inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency;
- (b)(6) personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- (b)(7) records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;
- (b)(8) contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or
- (b)(9) geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552a

- (d)(5) information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action proceeding;
- (j)(2) material reporting investigative efforts pertaining to the enforcement of criminal law including efforts to prevent, control, or reduce crime or apprehend criminals;
- (k)(1) information which is currently and properly classified pursuant to an Executive order in the interest of the national defense or foreign policy, for example, information involving intelligence sources or methods;
- (k)(2) investigatory material compiled for law enforcement purposes, other than criminal, which did not result in loss of a right, benefit or privilege under Federal programs, or which would identify a source who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(3) material maintained in connection with providing protective services to the President of the United States or any other individual pursuant to the authority of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3056;
- (k)(4) required by statute to be maintained and used solely as statistical records;
- (k)(5) investigatory material compiled solely for the purpose of determining suitability, eligibility, or qualifications for Federal civilian employment or for access to classified information, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(6) testing or examination material used to determine individual qualifications for appointment or promotion in Federal Government service the release of which would compromise the testing or examination process;
- (k)(7) material used to determine potential for promotion in the armed services, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished the material pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOI/PA
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET
FOI/PA# 1193607-0

Total Deleted Page(s) = 195

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Page 15 ~ Referral/Consult;
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Page 17 ~ Referral/Consult;
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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~

(S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 01/10/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: SA

Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA

IA

Attn: LEGAT

ALAT

Attn: SA

Attn: SA

b1
b3
b6
b7C
b7E

From:

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #:

(U)
(U)
(U)
(U)

Title: (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

b1
b3
b6
b7A
b7C
b7E

b1
b3
b6
b7C
b7E

Synopsis: (S) To request Counterterrorism Division (CTD) to
obtain authority to disseminate enclosed information.

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~

(S)

b1
b3
b6
b7C
b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]

Re: (X) [redacted] 01/10/2011

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301

Declassify On: 20360110

(U) [redacted]

Administrative: (S) [redacted]

b1
b3
b7E

Details: (S//NF) FBI [redacted] requests CTD obtain [redacted]
[redacted] authority to
disseminate the below outlined [redacted]

b1
b3
b7D
b7E

(S//NF) [redacted]

(S//NF) [redacted] KHAN is a 24 year-old self-proclaimed
salafi-jihadi who, from late 2005 until late 2009, administered a
fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog. KHAN has
expressed a radical Islamic world view on his online blog, as
well as on several other online forums with similar content.
Investigation has shown KHAN becoming increasingly radical over
time. [redacted]

b1
b3
b7E

[redacted] KHAN is suspected of motivating and
recruiting others for jihad. He is the creator of the first
U.S.-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as Jihad
Recollections. Individuals close to KHAN have expressed concern
that KHAN may become a martyr and he himself has indicated an
interest in becoming a martyr. Finally, in October 2009, Khan
traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~OB~~CON/~~NO~~FORN [redacted]

b1
b3
b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/10/2011

(S)

b1
b3
b6
b7C
b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~OB~~CON/~~NO~~FORN [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (U) [redacted] 01/10/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

[redacted] (S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

(U) For information.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2035
DATE: 03-27-2019

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

- 1 -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 12/23/2010

[redacted] date of birth [redacted] social security account number [redacted] cellular telephone number [redacted] home address [redacted] Street, Apartment [redacted] MOODY'S at 7 World Trade Center, New York; New York, was interviewed outside of his residence. After being advised of the nature of the interview and the identities of the interviewing agents, [redacted] voluntarily provided the following information:

[Author's note: During the second interview with investigating agents, [redacted] did not admit to being such close friends with SAMIR KHAN and [redacted], whose real identity is believed to be [redacted] as he later admitted to in a third interview. When questioned about this, [redacted] responded with the following:] [redacted] advised that so many things were going through his mind that he did not know what he should or should not talk about. He stated that he was very nervous when agents interviewed him at his office and that, most likely, the agents were able to see that he could not stop his hands from shaking. [redacted] claimed that he did not know [redacted] actual identity, and asked agents if they could tell him what it was. He has not had any contact with [redacted] since he moved away from Charlotte.

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[redacted] explained that he "grew apart" from SAMIR KHAN because KHAN made some "game changing decisions." [redacted] admitted to looking up KHAN on the internet over the years and referred to him as "poor Samir." He also stated that everybody likes to "pick on him."

Agents then asked [redacted] why, in previous interviews, it seemed like he was protecting another associate of his [redacted] who agents have identified as [redacted] one of his associates when he resided in Des Moines, Iowa,. He again advised that he was nervous about being interviewed by the agents, and was unsure of what he should say or not say about him. [redacted] believes that [redacted] was "a lot of talk" and was not as devoutly Muslim as he pretended to be. [redacted] "called him out" on not being a good Muslim because [redacted] would talk about praying five times per day, but would still socialize with women and listen to music. [redacted] is not violent and did not promote violence. [redacted] parents were worried about him becoming too religious.

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Investigation on 12/21/2010 at [redacted]

File # [redacted] Date dictated 12/23/2010

by SA [redacted] SA [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~

[redacted] (S)

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Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted]

, On 12/21/2010 , Page 2

[Author's note: [redacted] told the investigating agents during a previous interview that he would get in touch with the agents to notify them of the exact bookstore in Brooklyn where he claimed to have been given an AL-QAIDA propaganda video by an individual in the store. Approximately nine months have passed since that time. Agents asked [redacted] why he never provided this information.] [redacted] explained that it was his "bad" for not getting back to the agents with this information. He was worried that he was going to provide the wrong location to the agents and cause problems for a store owner that had done nothing wrong. When agents asked if he stands by his story about how he received the video, he said that he does.

[redacted] advised that he did not recall any previous discussions that he had with the interviewing agents in regard to a mosque in Queens, New York, where [redacted] had previously heard individuals discussing the thwarted attack on the New York City subways several years ago. [Author's note: In the second interview with [redacted] had mentioned this mosque to the agents. In a third interview, agents showed [redacted] several photographs of possible locations for this mosque, from which [redacted] was unable to identify the mosque in question.]

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When agents asked [redacted] what he intended to achieve in attending an Islamic school in Yemen, he advised that he and KHAN wanted to learn more about Islam. He was not sure of what [redacted] goal was in attending this school, and advised that [redacted] was "all over the map." [Author's note: In a previous interview, [redacted] advised that he, KHAN, and [redacted]

[redacted] When agents asked if this person's name was [redacted] advised that name sounded familiar, or possibly [redacted] (ph). He then stated that, during that period in his life, he was "young, emotional, and religious" and was willing to sacrifice everything to study Islam because "everything else paled in comparison."

[Author's note: In a previous interview with investigating agents, [redacted] advised that he no longer sees the world in "black and white." When the investigating agent asked [redacted] whether or not this was still true, [redacted] responded with the following: [redacted] said, "O.K." When asked to expand on "O.K.", [redacted] asked the agents if they had ever seen the movie, "Planet of the Apes." He then said that at the end of that movie, it showed that, overall, everyone just wants to get a long.

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Continuation of FD-302 of [REDACTED]

, On 12/21/2010 , Page 3

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However, United States (US) citizens may be just as guilty for the war and dead Muslims because they elected the President that led the country to war to begin with. [REDACTED] stated that he did not want to see any harm come to the US because that is where his family is. But, he thinks something needs to happen in Europe and countries such as Chechnya, Indonesia, and Nigeria due to the poor treatment of Muslims that reside there.

[REDACTED] asked the interviewing agents if they had brought up his name to anybody either in the US or overseas during the course of their investigation because he wants to travel back to Pakistan. Furthermore, he stated that he is not worried about himself, but wants to ensure that his tribe, parents, and relatives not be harmed if his story does not "check out." He then provided the following:

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[REDACTED] helped KHAN [REDACTED] that he used to operate. [REDACTED] also showed KHAN [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] He also showed him [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also showed KHAN how to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and KHAN were in touch with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and KHAN that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] noted that this was probably especially noteworthy to the agents due to the recent planned attack on a Christmas-tree lighting ceremony in a town in Oregon. [REDACTED] further advised that he, as well as these "brothers," are aware of what internet sites are "bogus" and monitored by the FBI.

[REDACTED] still visits a website that he believes is called [REDACTED] [Author's note: Subsequent investigation reveals that the possible URL's for this website are [REDACTED] for the Arabic Forum; and [REDACTED] He also visits [REDACTED] a Pakistani website, and [REDACTED] a Chechen website. He also visits a website called [REDACTED] [Author's note: Subsequent investigation reveals that the possible [REDACTED]

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~~SECRET~~

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Continuation of FD-302 of [REDACTED], On 12/21/2010, Page 4

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] was also in contact with [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] has not heard or seen any sign of KHAN in recent years. Regaining contact with him via the internet would be difficult. However, it would not be difficult for him to reconnect with him. He further advised that it would be easy to get in touch with KHAN if someone went to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] also advised that he told KHAN how to get on [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] advised agents that as of Friday, December 24th, 2010, [REDACTED] MOODY'S. When agents asked what he would be doing, he stated that he had no plans as of yet.

[REDACTED] asked agents what he "owed" them. Agents informed [REDACTED] that they still want to know the location of the bookstore where he received the the AL-QAIDA video. [REDACTED] then advised agents that he would get that information for them and that the next time that he meets with agents [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [Author's note: During the course of the interview, [REDACTED] asked the interviewing agents if he could make a telephone call to his wife to inform her that he was all right. When he spoke to his wife on his cellular phone in the back of the agents' Bureau vehicle, he told her that everything was fine, and he was at a bar across the street from their residence having a drink with the agents.]

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]

REASON: 1.4 (C)

DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036

DATE: 03-27-2019

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

(Rev. 05-01-2008)

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 01/18/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

UC [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

SOS [redacted]

IA [redacted]

Attn: SSA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

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Charlotte

From: [redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U) (S) [redacted] (S)

Title: (U) (S) [redacted] (S)

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Synopsis: (S) [redacted] (S)

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301

Declassify On: 20360113

(U) [redacted]

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

(S)

Reference: ~~(S)~~ [redacted]

(S)

Administrative: ~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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Details: ~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ In January 2009, [redacted]

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(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] According to intelligence reporting, al-Aulagi

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(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] The FBI assesses [redacted]

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/18/2011 (S)

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(U) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN:

(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN (KHAN), an USPER and the subject of FBI Charlotte [redacted], is a 24 year old self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi, and a promoter of the Salafi-Jihadist ideology. Through KHAN's skilled use of the Internet, he is engaging people globally to participate in serving his cause. KHAN attended Masjid Al Mustafa, Islamic Society of Greater Charlotte (ISGC), as well as the Islamic Center of Charlotte (ICC). In April 2009, he became a member of the Dawa Committee for ISGC, but in August 2009, KHAN grew disenchanted with ISGC due to issues with the Imam. A few months later, in October 2009, KHAN made hijra to Sanaa, Yemen. In November/December 2009, KHAN left Sanaa for the Hadramout governorate of Yemen to study Arabic, Fiqh (jurisprudence), and Shariah (Islamic law). While in the U.S., KHAN proclaimed himself a Salafi-Jihadist, and separated himself from the Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) because the organization does not support violent jihad.

~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] From late 2005 until late 2009, KHAN administered the fundamentalist Islamic, Salafi-Jihadist online blog, revolution.thabaat.net (formerly revolution.muslimpad.com), which is vehemently anti-Western and particularly anti-American. The result of the blog aims at weakening America and the West by any violent means possible, for the sake of establishing an Islamic Caliphate. KHAN promotes the idea that all Muslims worldwide have a religious duty to force non-Muslim governments, government presences (embassies, consulates, corporations, bases, etc.), and the military out of "Muslim lands." KHAN believes that it is a religious duty of all Muslims to either convert, subjugate, or kill all non-Muslims (Jews, Christians, Shia Muslims, etc.), whom he considers kafirs (apostates). KHAN also believes that it is incumbent on all Muslims living in the West (non-Muslim lands) to emigrate (make Hijrah) to the "lands of Jihad" in support of the Mujahideen. If they can not leave the West, then they must find other ways to support the Mujahideen. KHAN believes that any support of the Mujahideen against non-Muslims is a form of jihad, but specifically defines jihad as "to fight - to kill and be killed - for the pure sake of Allah."

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/18/2011 (S)

He states that it is an obligation of every individual Muslim to participate in jihad.

(S) (S//~~ORCON~~) [redacted] On his online blog, as well as on several other online forums with similar content, KHAN has expressed a radical Islamic world view. KHAN's blog contained postings that support violent jihad to include links to hundreds of videos that graphically depict the killing of US soldiers in Iraq, suicide attacks on coalition facilities, and speeches by [redacted] Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) that merged with al-Qa'ida), and who is considered [redacted] al-Qa'ida, and USAMA BIN LADEN (leader of al-Qa'ida). KHAN has stated his desire to bring about the Islamic Caliphate and he believes the west is a hypocrisy. He states in his blog, "We will conquer the world with the Qur'aan in one hand and the Gun in the other and we will fight until Islaam is supreme over all lands," and "we want the clash of civilizations. We want the clash of Religions. And it is Islaam that will dominate and crush its opponents."

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(S) (S//~~ORCON~~) [redacted] The investigation has shown KHAN becoming increasingly religious and irrevocably radical over time. [redacted] (S)

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[redacted] KHAN is suspected of motivating and recruiting others for jihad and is the creator of the first US-based, English-language, pro-jihad-magazine, known as *Jihad Recollections*. Moreover, individuals close to KHAN have expressed concern that KHAN may become a martyr and he himself has indicated an interest in becoming a martyr. KHAN defines jihad as "to fight - to kill and be killed - for the pure sake of Allah, in order to make His Word the Supreme." KHAN's blog inspires viewers to believe that jihad is not only obligatory upon Muslims, but is also an act of worship. KHAN employs fear and emotional manipulation as tactics by stating that Muslims who do not participate in jihad are in a state of sin, causing religious, but moderate Muslims to question their level of faith and conviction. The significance of this is that some Muslims who are irresolute about their level of commitment may reach a tipping point and turn towards radicalism, urged by feelings of guilt or negligence.

(U) In summary, KHAN's Salafi-Jihadi ideology envisages a global jihad against non-Muslims that will lead to the re-establishment of the Caliphate. The Caliphate encompasses all Muslim nations (the Ummah) joined into one political entity ruled by a Caliph (successor--God's Shadow on Earth) under a system of Shariah Law. The army of the Caliphate will be comprised of the

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism

Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

(S)

Mujahideen who will eventually conquer all the nations of the world.

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~~(S//NF)~~ For more information on KHAN's investigation, please see KHAN's [redacted] which is updated almost daily with developments, investigative milestones, and findings:

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

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Summary: ~~(S)~~/~~(S)~~

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

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(S)

Recommended Action: ~~(S)~~/~~NF~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/18/2011 (S)

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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(U) Information only for [redacted] Read and clear.

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Information only for the Counterterrorism [redacted]
[redacted] Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Information only for the [redacted]
[redacted] Read and clear.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) Information only. Read and clear.

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism

Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

(S)

Set Lead 5: (Info)

[redacted]

AT

[redacted]

(U) Information only for [redacted] Read and
clear.

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 03-28-2019

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 01/18/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: SA [REDACTED]
IA [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte
[REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED] 742

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED]
(U) [REDACTED]

Title: (U) INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS/PRODUCTION
COUNTERTERRORISM

(U) ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT- GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (U) Document interview of [REDACTED]

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360118

Reference: (U) [REDACTED]

Details: (U) On 12/14/2010, [REDACTED] date of birth [REDACTED], Social Security Number [REDACTED] was interviewed at his residence, [REDACTED] Charlotte, NC 28216. After being advised of the identities of the interviewing agents and the nature of the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information.

(U) [REDACTED] is originally from the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. He has lived in Charlotte for the past five years, prior to living in Charlotte he lived in New York for approximately eleven years. [REDACTED] described himself as a catholic, who maintains few friends and only considers his wife and brothers as "friends".

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~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED], 01/18/2011

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~~(S)~~ In response to the question of how someone could have gained access to his license [REDACTED] provided multiple instances in which someone may have been able to gain access: He provided that he had lost his drivers license once while shopping for a vehicle at Planet Suzuki, 110 Northchase Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina 28213. He stated that per the test drive rules he was required to leave his drivers license. He left his license with [REDACTED] (LNU), who he described as a black male in his mid to late twenties. [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED] no longer worked with Planet Suzuki. After his test drive, [REDACTED] forgot to retrieve his license, when he tried to retrieve his license he was informed that [REDACTED] had taken the license home. After a short period of time [REDACTED] was eventually able to retrieve the license. In a brief interview with the [REDACTED] of Planet Suzuki, SA [REDACTED] and the writer were able to determine that Planet Suzuki makes a color copy of all drivers licenses while the customer is test driving a vehicle. These images are stored on a computer system within Planet Suzuki. [REDACTED]

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] previously worked as [REDACTED] a Harris Teeter grocery store, 2720 West Mallard Creek Church Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28262. During a routine store steering committee meeting [REDACTED] learned that his [REDACTED] [REDACTED] cellular telephone number [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is a Muslim. [REDACTED] considered [REDACTED] a close friend at work and while she would have had access to [REDACTED] he did not believe she would have taken his drivers license. [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED] would never have stolen his identity from work and that the two remain friends. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] negative for [REDACTED] and phone number [REDACTED].

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(U) [REDACTED] stated that he had never heard of Samir Khan, nor did he know any Muslims other than [REDACTED]. He does not shop online with any frequency, and did not recall a time when he had ever scanned or copied his drivers license.

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 01/18/2011

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(U) ~~(S)~~ Charlotte considers this lead covered. No further action will be taken against [REDACTED] as he has been determined to have no association with Samir Khan.

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~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED], 01/18/2011

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Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) Read and clear.

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 03-28-2019

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: Routine

Date: 01/19/2011

To: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]

Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
IA [redacted]

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Attn: [redacted]

IA [redacted]
IA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

IA M [redacted]

Intelligence Directorate

Attn: [redacted]

IA [redacted]

~~Charlotte~~

Attn: [redacted]

SA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
SA [redacted]

From: Intelligence Directorate

[redacted]
Contact: [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U) [redacted] (S)

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Title: (S) [redacted] (S)

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Synopsis: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] [redacted]

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(S) To: [redacted] From: Intelligence Directorate
Re: (U) [redacted] Date: 01/19/2011

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Derived From : ~~FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
Declassify On: ~~20360119~~

(U) [redacted]

Administrative: (S/NF) [redacted]

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Details: (S) [redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

To:

[Redacted]

From: Intelligence Directorate

Re:

~~(S)~~

[Redacted]

Date: 01/19/2011

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(S) To: [redacted] From: Intelligence Directorate
Re: (U) [redacted] Date: 01/19/2011

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(S)

To:

[Redacted]

Re:

~~(S)~~

[Redacted]

From: Intelligence Directorate

Date: 01/19/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

To:

[redacted]

From: Intelligence Directorate

Re:

(U)

[redacted]

Date: 01/19/2011

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(U) Questions regarding this communication should be directed to SSA [redacted] IA [redacted]

[redacted]

at

[redacted]

or

[redacted]

IA

[redacted]

at

[redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S) To: [REDACTED] From: Intelligence Directorate
Re: (U) [REDACTED] Date: 01/19/2011

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~

(S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 01/18/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

[Redacted]

SSA
IA

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

UC
SSA
IA

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

SSA

[Redacted]

Charlotte

Attn:

SSA
SA
SA
SA
TFO
IA
IA

[Redacted]

From: Charlotte

[Redacted]

Contact:

[Redacted]

Approved By:

[Redacted]

Drafted By:

[Redacted]

Case ID #:

[Redacted]

(U)

[Redacted]

(S)

Title:

(S)

[Redacted]

(S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT-GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

[Redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~

(S)

FILE

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

[redacted]

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Synopsis: ~~(S)~~

(S)

Derived From : Multiple Sources
Declassify On: 20360118

Reference: ~~(S)~~

(S)

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Administrative: ~~(S)~~

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Enclosure(s): ~~(S)~~

(S)

Details: ~~(S)~~/~~(S)~~

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(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) 01/18/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/18/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U)

~~(S)~~ Information is provided to the [redacted]
[redacted] for information only.

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Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U)

~~(S)~~ Information is provided to [redacted] for
information only.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

~~(S)~~ [redacted]
[redacted]

(S)

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 01/24/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

Charlotte

IA

SA

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From:

Contact:

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U)

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Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT-GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: ~~(S)~~//~~NOFORN~~

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Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360124

Reference: (U)

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Administrative: ~~(S)~~

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

DOCUMENT NAME

CLASS LEVEL ~~C~~ ~~S~~ SN TS U

Yes

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 01/24/2011

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~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] (S)
[REDACTED]

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Details: ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (S)

(U) Family Heritage is a Cleveland based company that provides supplemental insurance products coast to coast.

(U) On 1/4/2011, writer spoke with [REDACTED] who was accompanied by [REDACTED] for Family Heritage, telephone number [REDACTED]. It has been a long time since [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] as she is now [REDACTED]. Writer provided the name Samir Khan and requested any documentation the company had in their possession relating to Khan (i.e. resume, online profile, applications, emails, etc..).

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(U) A search of DOJ, local government and public records did not reveal any derogatory information on [REDACTED]

(U) On 1/10/2011, writer was contacted by [REDACTED]. The Information Technology Department conducted a search of company emails and the company also searched hard copies of documents in an effort to find any information related to Khan. Both searches met with negative results. [REDACTED] related that since Khan never became an insurance agent, they typically wouldn't retain any information.

~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] (S)
[REDACTED]

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(U) [REDACTED] does not believe this warrants any further investigation. [REDACTED] considers this lead covered.

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 01/24/2011

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LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [REDACTED]

b7E

(U) [REDACTED]: Read and
Clear.

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) [REDACTED] Read and Clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-01-2019

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- 1 -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 01/24/2011

On January 24, 2011, [redacted] also known as [redacted] date of birth [redacted] residential address [redacted] Street, Apartment [redacted] [redacted] cellular telephone number [redacted], residential telephone number [redacted] was interviewed at a Starbucks in [redacted]. Also present for the interview was [redacted] [redacted] fiancée. After being advised as to the identities of the interviewing agents and the nature of the interview, [redacted] provided the following information:

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Young converts to Islam turn to extremist views because they look at the world and see "bad things" happening to muslims and get angry. A lot of the new converts decide they want to do something in support of Islam. On-line jihadists live in a "fantasy world." The individuals who go on-line don't realize they can never go overseas and fight because "they're being watched." The individual who doesn't say anything or express any interest is the one who is able to travel freely. These individuals aren't on forums because they don't want to bring attention to themselves. [redacted] was arrested at the airport trying to get to Somalia to fight because he was a known individual.

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[redacted] never wanted to go overseas and fight. [redacted] wanted to take part in propaganda operations to contribute. [redacted] was too scared to try and fight. [redacted] met people who were from the countries where fighting was taking place. These individuals spoke about the terrible conditions the fighters faced from losing toes through frostbite to death. These individuals did not fight but were simply from these countries (NFI).

b6
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All individuals who are or have been affiliated with REVOLUTION MUSLIM (RM) or other extremist internet forums have had contact or interactions with a Florida-based [redacted] [redacted] began targeting [redacted] after the Jewish Defense Organization wrote about [redacted] and his involvement with RM. [redacted] posted pictures of [redacted] family on-line which started an on-line dialogue between [redacted] and [redacted]

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(S) Investigation on 01/24/2011 at [redacted]
(S) File # [redacted] Date dictated 01/24/2011
by SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~

[redacted] (S)

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Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted], On 01/24/2011, Page 2

[redacted] discovered RM on his own when he first converted to Islam. When [redacted] first became involved in RM, the organization was meant to provide assistance for muslims in need. RM was similar in its goals to the Black Panther movement without the militant aspect. [redacted] involved himself because of an obligation to help people and his desire to dedicate himself to social works. RM took a strong stance against social injustice in its beginning. [redacted] was responsible for administering RM's blog and posting videos. [redacted] was well-read and individuals liked the way he wrote.

RM tried to start a non-profit organization focused on providing food to the needy. [redacted] RM as well but [redacted] LIGHT UPON LIGHT PRODUCTIONS. RM collected \$2000 to purchase food.

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The \$2000 was subsequently sent to [redacted] RM. Any money that RM obtained [redacted] RM when [redacted] was involved. RM only received [redacted] every two months when [redacted] RM blog.

[redacted] discovered a link to Samir KHAN's (KHAN) blog on RM. [redacted] was contacted by KHAN via email and [redacted] Jihad Recollections, KHAN's on-line newsletter. KHAN liked [redacted] has never met KHAN in person.

After [redacted] returned from Saudi Arabia, RM took on a much more radical tone. [redacted] RM and [redacted] Maqdisi philosophy.

[redacted] RM from Usama bin Laden, which had been released by the Al Qaeda (AO) media arm, As-Sahab. [redacted]

[redacted] believed this would protect RM through freedom of speech. [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~

[redacted] (S)

Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted], On 01/24/2011, Page 3

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anyway. The disclaimer served as a red herring to keep attention off of RM. [redacted] has no respect for AQ. RM was supposed to be about helping people and AQ's philosophy did not match this idea. [redacted] did not believe in this new message.

[redacted] researched Islam more and realized that RM was following the "wrong path." [redacted] RM [redacted] did not want to get in trouble for being affiliated with RM and its new radical philosophy.

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RM was disbanded after it moved to the United Kingdom because the [redacted] Last Name Unknown, screen name [redacted] RM when it moved to the UK.

[redacted] is a new website run by [redacted] This [redacted] RM left off.

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[redacted] has contact with RM [redacted] every now and then. Most individuals from [redacted] RM days don't interact with him any longer [redacted]

[redacted] moved to [redacted] in August 2010 but returned after about a month. [redacted]

[redacted] Philadelphia has the largest Salafi community and [redacted]. While [redacted]

[redacted] does not know many converts to Islam. [redacted] but went to mosque in Germantown. [redacted]

[redacted] has no contact with the Salafi jihadi community because he is [redacted]

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[redacted] do not attend a mosque regularly in Boston. When they do attend they are welcomed even though most are Sunni mosques. Aside from [redacted] has never received any threats of physical violence for his change in views. [redacted] occasionally [redacted]

[redacted] has no interaction with Tablighi Jamaat (TJ) in Boston. [redacted] met members a few times in Tampa, Florida. TJ is similar to Jehovah's Witnesses who knock on peoples doors and

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~~SECRET~~

[redacted] (S)

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Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted], On 01/24/2011, Page 4

try and get them to convert. TJ never appeared to be affiliated with extremism.

[redacted] is currently unemployed and wants to start school. [redacted] is interested in film studies and he's looking at North Shore Community College. [redacted] has never had a driver's license, a passport or traveled overseas.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED]b1
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- Samir Khan Overview
- FBI Interest
- Khan's Radicalization Efforts
- Radicalization Timeline
- Current Situation

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED]

FBI - Charlotte Division

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

Samir Khan Overview

- (U) 25 years old
- (U) Born in Saudi Arabia; [redacted]
- (U) Family arrived in New York in 1992
- (U) Naturalized USPER
- (U) Moved to Charlotte in 2003 and [redacted] in upper middle class neighborhood until 2009
- (U) Was very active on the Internet while [redacted]
- (U) ~~(S)~~ Self-proclaimed Salafi Jihadi
- (U) ~~(S)~~ Moved to Yemen in mid October 2009 – study, teach, possible hijra
- (U) ~~(S)~~ Currently operational with AQAP



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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ISA~~

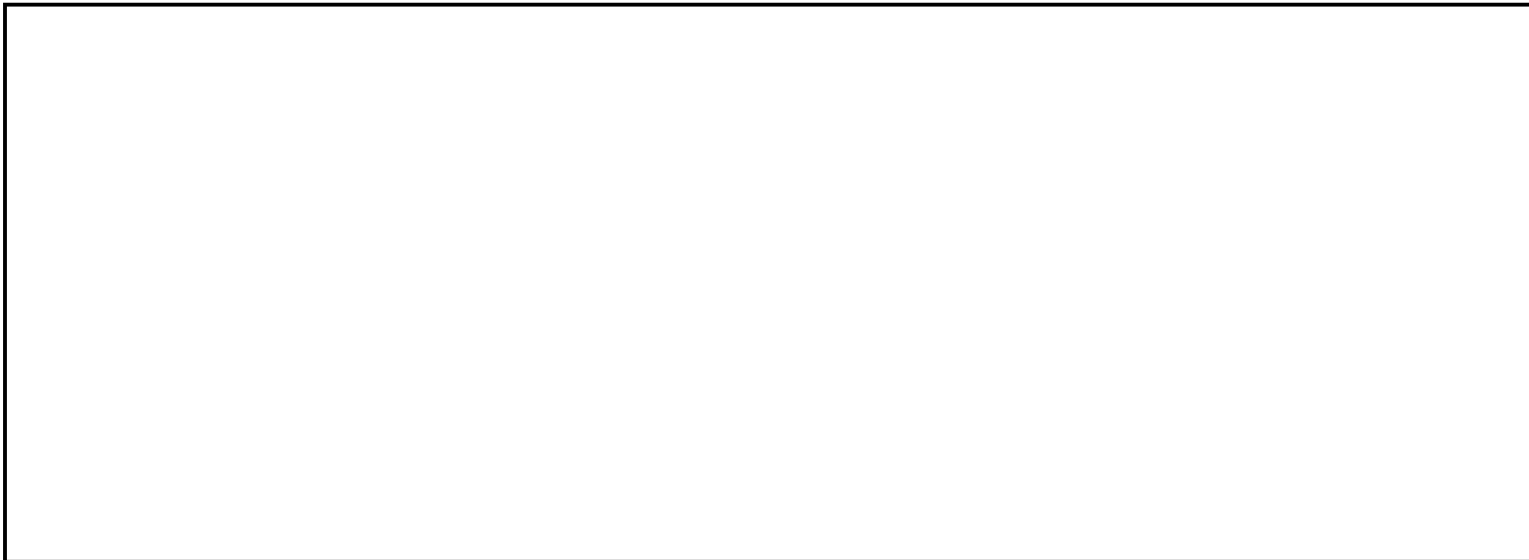
FBI - Charlotte Division

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

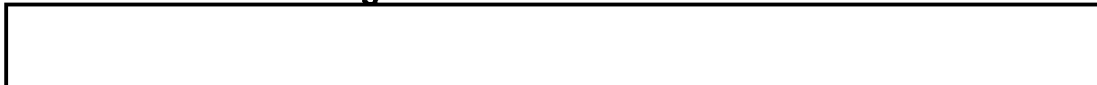
FBI INTEREST

- Case opened in January 2007



(S)

- Investigation of Khan while he was in the US revealed that he:
 - became more radical
 - became a radicalizing influence on many individuals
 - became more religious



(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

FBI - Charlotte Division

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Khan's Radicalization Efforts

- Khan's radicalization efforts involve both indirect and direct contacts (online and face-to-face) to spread extremist propaganda as well as radicalize individuals to extremist ideology.
- Khan was/is behind the following extremist works aimed at radicalizing individuals:
 - The Ignored Puzzle Pieces of Knowledge (blog)
 - Password-protected forums (private chat, public postings)
 - [redacted] (media)
 - Jihad Recollections (online magazine)
 - Inspire (online magazine)



- Khan has had a role in both domestic and international radicalization efforts.

[redacted] etc.
[redacted] etc.

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(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

Radicalization Timeline

[Empty timeline area for content entry]

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

FBI - Charlotte Division

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SECRET//NOFORN

Radicalization Timeline

(S)

SECRET//NOFORN

FBI - Charlotte Division

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SECRET//NOFORN

Radicalization Timeline

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SECRET//NOFORN

FBI - Graphic Division

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Current Situation

- Working closely with USIC
-
-
- Seeking More Information List
- Criminal Complaint draft
- Designation request

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

FBI - Charlotte Division

~~SECRET~~

Team Khan

- SA [REDACTED], FBI
- SA [REDACTED]
- IA [REDACTED], FBI
- SOS [REDACTED] FBI

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~~SECRET~~

FBI - Charlotte Division

UNCLASSIFIED



Questions?

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ ☐ (S)

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG ☐
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-02-2019

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE



Samir Khan

Team Khan
FBI Charlotte

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ ☐ (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

Samir Khan Overview

- (U) 25 years old
- (U) Born in Saudi Arabia; [REDACTED]
- (U) Naturalized USPER (arrived in NY in 1992)
- (U) Moved to Charlotte in 2003 and [REDACTED] in upper middle class neighborhood until mid October 2009
- (U) Was very active on the Internet while [REDACTED]
- (U) ~~(S)~~ Self-proclaimed Salafi Jihadi
- (U) ~~(S)~~ Moved to Yemen in mid October 2009 – study, teach, possible hijra
- (U) ~~(S)~~ Currently operational with AQAP



~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

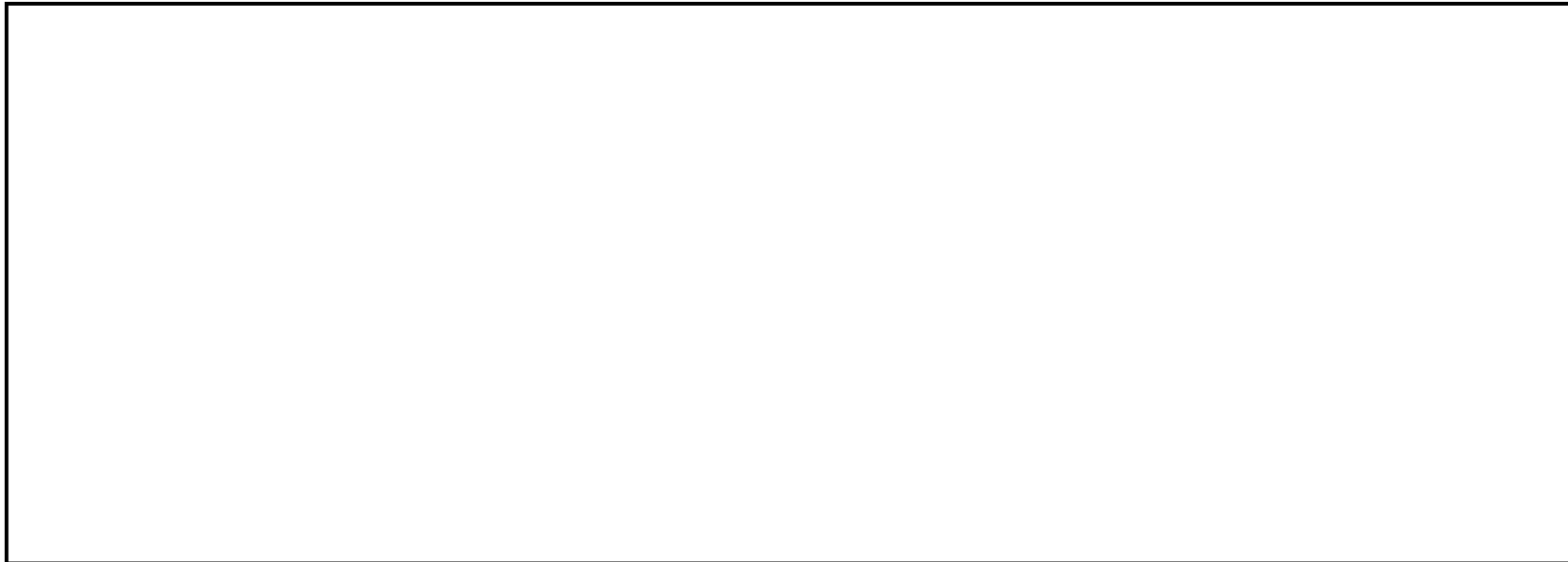
FBI - Charlotte Division

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FBI INTEREST

- Case opened in January 2007



- Investigation of Khan while he was in the US revealed that he:
 - became more radical
 - became more religious
 - [redacted] (S)
 - was a radicalizing influence on many individuals

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FBI - Charlotte Division

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Khan's Radicalization Efforts

- Khan has had a role in both domestic and international radicalization efforts.
- Khan's radicalization efforts involve both indirect and direct contacts (online and face-to-face) to spread extremist propaganda as well as radicalize individuals to extremist ideology.
- Khan was/is behind the following extremist works aimed at radicalizing individuals:
 - The Ignored Puzzle Pieces of Knowledge (blog)
 - [redacted] (media)
 - Password-protected forums (private chat, public postings)
 - Jihad Recollections (online magazine)
 - Inspire (online magazine)



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Radicalization Timeline

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FBI - Charlotte Division

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

Radicalization Timeline

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

FBI Charlotte Division

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Radicalization Timeline

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FBI - Charlotte Division

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Vulnerabilities/Ideas

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FBI - Charlotte Division

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 02/01/2011

[REDACTED] date of birth [REDACTED] telephone number [REDACTED], was interviewed via telephone. [REDACTED] called the interviewing agent after he provided [REDACTED] father with his contact information. The interviewing agent informed [REDACTED] that he wished to speak with her about an individual named SAMIR KHAN. After being advised of the interviewing agent's identity and the nature of the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information:

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[REDACTED] does not know any individual with the name SAMIR KHAN. When informed that he may have previously [REDACTED] [REDACTED] she replied that she knew [REDACTED] but did not know much about her personal life.

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[REDACTED] asked why the government was interested in KHAN. The interviewing agent informed [REDACTED] that KHAN wrote an article for an online magazine called "Inspire" in which he detailed his involvement with Al Qaeda and his radical beliefs. [REDACTED] has never heard of "Inspire" magazine.

[REDACTED] is married and has lived in Michigan for approximately three years. [REDACTED] declined to provide her current address, noting that she doesn't want to get involved with this matter.

Investigation on 01/31/2011 at [REDACTED] (telephonically)

File # [REDACTED] Date dictated [REDACTED]

by SA [REDACTED]

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-03-2019 BY [REDACTED] NSICG

Charlotte FBI - [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 02, 2011 6:04 AM
Attach: AMEF Posting (2).pdf
Subject: Fw: al-Fursan Media Logo
Add to update and file

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----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tue Feb 01 22:01:35 2011
Subject: al-Fursan Media Logo

It has been a while, hope all is well. You probably have this already but I thought I would pass it on just in case. A couple of days ago, a member of the Ansar al-Mujahideen English Forum posted a urdu nasheed video that has been translated into English. The media logo for the video was the one that Khan used for JR and I haven't seen anyone use it since he left. I don't know if it means anything but I thought it was interesting.

I have attached a screenshot along with the link to the forum posting

[REDACTED]

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

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Desk: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

E-mail 1: [REDACTED]

E-mail 2: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Main Line: [REDACTED]

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: If the word "EXEMPT" or "~~CONFIDENTIAL~~" appears in this message line, this message and any attachments are for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information that is exempt from public disclosure. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. If you have received this message in error please contact the sender (by phone or reply electronic mail) and then destroy all copies of the original message.

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This email and the contents thereof may be subject to public record requests per Statutes

[REDACTED]

~\ A Mujāhid's Pen /\~

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Presents

The English Translation of
The Urdu Nasheed:

"Today, Your Bloodthirstiness Astonishes Animals"



~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-03-2019

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 02/01/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

IA [redacted]

General Counsel

Attn: [redacted]

AGC [redacted]

Charlotte

Attn: [redacted]

SA [redacted]

From: Charlotte

Squad [redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (S) [redacted]

Title: (S) [redacted]

Synopsis: (S) [redacted]

(U)

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20090615
Declassify On: 02/01/2036

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

Memo copy

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: [redacted] 02/01/2011

(S) [redacted] (U) [redacted]

References: (U) [redacted]

Administrative: ~~(S)~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~(S)~~/~~NOFORN~~

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Details:

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: [redacted] 02/01/2011

~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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~~(S)~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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~~(S)~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~(S)~~ [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: [redacted] 02/01/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: [redacted] 02/01/2011

[redacted]

(S)

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(U)

[redacted]

REQUEST

[redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: [redacted] 02/01/2011

LEAD (S) :

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

b1
b3
b7E

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted] Information Only.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted] Information Only.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

GENERAL COUNSEL

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted] : Information Only.

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~OB~~CON [] (S)

b1
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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: [] 02/01/2011

Set Lead 5: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) Information Only.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~OB~~CON [] (S)

b1
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b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C, D)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-03-2019

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 01/07/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

Attn: ALAT [redacted]

Attn: SA [redacted]

Attn: SA [redacted]

Attn: SA [redacted]

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[redacted]

Charlotte

[redacted]

From: Charlotte

Squad [redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (X)

(U)
(U)
(X)
(U)

Title: (S)

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S) (S)

(U)

(S)

SAMIR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMISM INSPIRED

(U)

[redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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[redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

(X)

[Redacted]

(S)

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(X)

Synopsis: (X/DA)

(S)

Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301
Declassify On: 20360107

(U)

[Redacted]

Administrative:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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Details: (S)

[Redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

[Large Redacted Area]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) 01/07/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~ / ~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~ / ~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) 01/07/2011

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[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Count [Redacted] From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

[Large Redacted Block]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(U)~~ [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

[Large Redacted Block]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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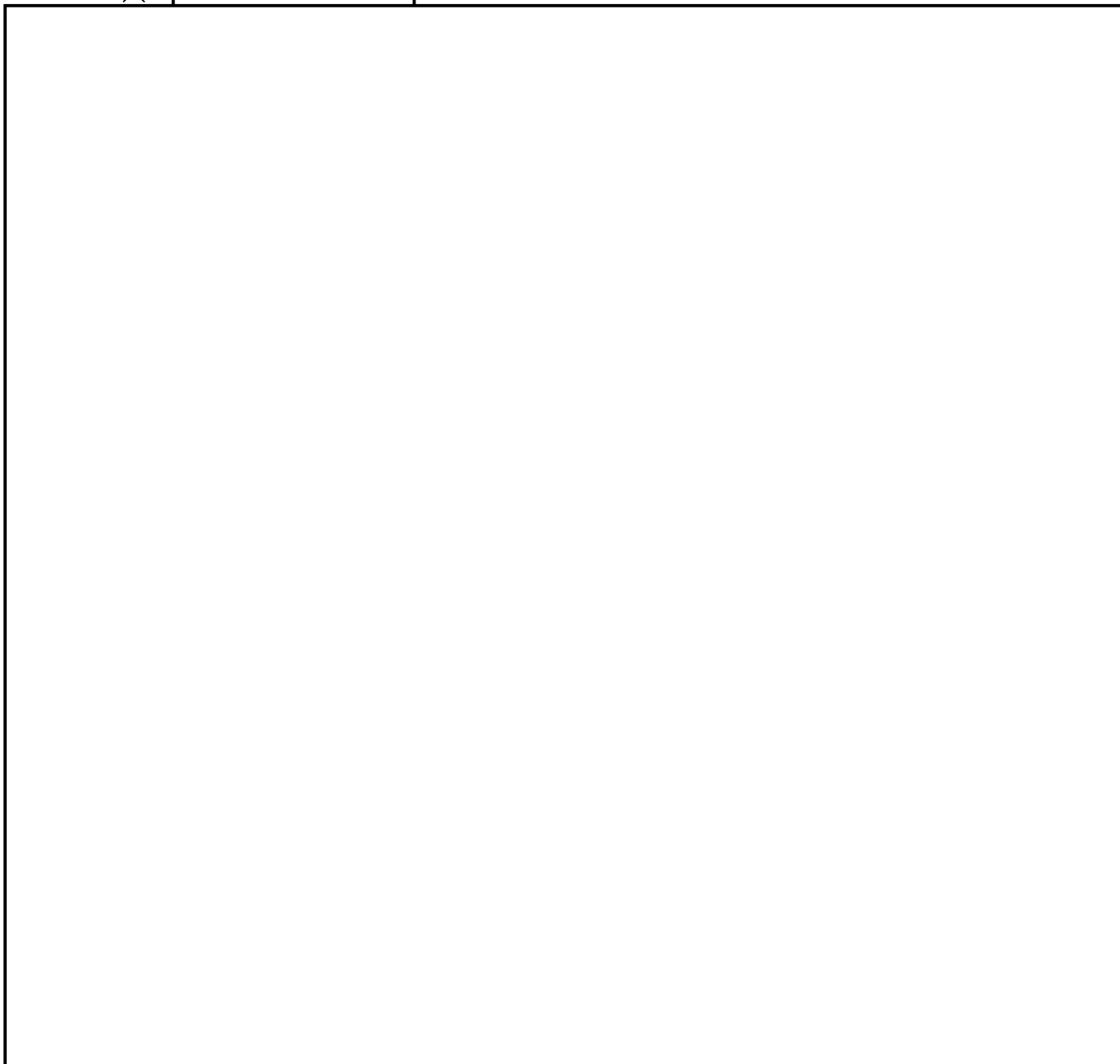
~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~



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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) 01/07/2011



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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

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(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~ / ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~ / ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

[Large Redacted Area]

(S)

~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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(S)
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] 1/07/2011

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(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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(S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte

Re: (X) [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

[Redacted]

(S)

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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b7E

~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [Redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(U)~~ [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

(S)

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b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/07/2011

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(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 01/07/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Information)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [REDACTED]

(U) [REDACTED]: Read and clear.

b7D
b7E

Set Lead 2: (Information)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [REDACTED]

(U) [REDACTED] Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Information)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 4 (Information)

[REDACTED]
AT [REDACTED]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 5: (Information)

[REDACTED]
AT [REDACTED]

(U) Read and clear.

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 01/07/2011

Set Lead 6 (Information)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 02/08/2011

To: [redacted]

International Operations
Counterterrorism

Attn: LEGAT [redacted]
ALAT [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]
Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
IA [redacted]

Attn: SSA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

Attn: SA [redacted]

b1
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b7E

Charlotte

From: Counterterrorism

Contact: SOS [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

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b7E

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U) [redacted]

(S)
(S)
(U)
(U)

Title: (U) (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

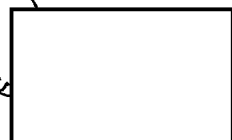
(U)

(U)

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/08/2011

Synopsis: ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] (S)

Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20090615
Declassify On: 20360208

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(U) [redacted]

Reference: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)

Administrative: ~~(U//FOUO)~~ [redacted]

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~~(U//FOUO)~~ [redacted]

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(U//~~FOUO~~) Pursuant to Attorney General Guidelines, for Domestic FBI Operations (AGG-Dom), Part VI.B.1.d., the dissemination of the enclosed information is in the interest of national security of the United States. The information is relevant to the recipient's authorized responsibilities, its dissemination is consistent with the National Security interests of the United States, and the FBI has considered the effect such dissemination may reasonably be expected to have on any identifiable U.S. person.

(U//~~FOUO~~) [redacted] has reviewed the information contained in the enclosed communication. Passage of this information is consistent with the standards for dissemination of U.S. person

b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted] (Pending), 02/08/2011

and non-U.S. person information to foreign authorities as
authorized in the AGG-Dom.

(U)

~~(S)~~//~~(NF)~~

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Details:

~~(S)~~//~~(NF)~~

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(S)

(S)

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[redacted] KHAN is a 24 year-old self-proclaimed
salafi-jihadi who, from late 2005 until late 2009, administered a
fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog. KHAN has

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/08/2011

expressed a radical Islamic world view on his online blog, as well as on several other online forums with similar content. Investigation has shown KHAN becoming increasingly radical over time.

b1
b3

[redacted] KHAN is suspected of motivating and recruiting others for jihad. He is the creator of the first U.S.-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as Jihad Recollections. Individuals close to KHAN have expressed concern that KHAN may become a martyr and he himself has indicated an interest in becoming a martyr. Finally, in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

(S)

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/08/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

[redacted]

AT

[redacted]

~~(S)~~/~~(NF)~~

[redacted]

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(S)

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(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(Re 05-01-2008)

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-03-2019

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 02/15/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: Squad
SA

Attn: Squad
SSA

From:

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #:

Title:

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis:

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360215

Enclosure(s):

Details:

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Charlotte From: [redacted]
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 02/15/2011

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] Read and clear.

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Set Lead 2: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 02/11/2011

To:

Attn:

FE

Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA

SSA

Charlotte

Attn:

Attn: SA

Attn: SA

From: Charlotte

Squad

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U) (S)

Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(U). LATENT PRINTS

Synopsis: (U) Request FBI conduct a latent prints exam for captioned investigation.

(U) (S)

Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301
Declassify On: 02/11/2036

~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/11/2011

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Administrative: ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted]

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b7E

(S)

Package Copy: (U) Being forwarded under separate cover is FBI Charlotte evidence item 1B17.

(U) [redacted]

b7E

Details:

BACKGROUND ON SAMIR KHAN

~~(S)~~ ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] In late 2006, Samir Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from [redacted] home in Charlotte, NC. On his online blog, as well as on several other online forums and web sites with similar content, Khan expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [redacted] (S)

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Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections," which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

~~(S)~~//~~(S)~~/~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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(S)

(S) ~~(S)~~//~~(S)~~ [redacted] Based on knowledge of Khan's skills, network, and mindset, FBI Charlotte concludes that Khan's roles in AQAP are that of a propagandist, recruiter, operational planner, and potential martyr.

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~~(S)~~ In 2007, [redacted] provided FBI Charlotte with a copy of Khan's passport application from 2002. In 2010, [redacted] provided FBI Charlotte with the original of Khan's passport application from 2002. With permission from [redacted], FBI Charlotte entered Khan's original passport application, which includes a photograph of Khan, into evidence (as item 1B17). [redacted] asks that this evidence be released back to DoS as soon as possible and that a [redacted] chain of custody form follow this evidence through processing.

b7E

~~(S)~~ For further case information, please visit the case sharepoint (on FBI Intranet) at:

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

CURRENT SITUATION

[redacted]

(S)

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b7A
b7C
b7D
b7E

(U//~~LES~~) As referenced above, on [redacted]

b7E

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/11/2011

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(U)

~~(S//NF)~~

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b7E

[redacted]
[redacted] AQAP: the August 2009 assassination attempt against
Saudi Prince Muhammad bin Nayaf, and the [redacted]

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(S)

(U//~~LES~~)

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(U//~~LES~~)

b7D
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

(U) REQUEST

b7E

(S) Writer requests that FBI Charlotte's Evidence Technician, taking into account that a latent prints exam is being requested, pack evidence item 1B17 and provide this item to the [redacted] immediately.

(U) (S) FBI Charlotte requests that the [redacted] conduct a latent prints exam on item 1B17 and compare the results of this exam with laboratory number 101019016. item 02. the aforementioned two, [redacted] [redacted] as well as previously submitted evidence from FBI Charlotte. FBI Charlotte notes that the photograph attached to 1B17 may be the only item not handled by many individuals.

b7D
b7E

(U) (S) FBI Charlotte has no "elimination prints" list due to the fact that 1B17 was provided by [redacted]

b7E

(U) (S) FBI Charlotte requests that 1B17 be made a high priority by the [redacted] due to the fact that [redacted] would like to have this item back. In addition, FBI Charlotte requests that the chain of custody form accompanying 1B17 be completed as 1B17 is processed.

b7E

(U) The continued assistance of the FBI [redacted] in this matter is greatly appreciated.

b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/11/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) (S) Writer requests that FBI Charlotte's Evidence Technician, taking into account that a latent prints exam is being requested, pack evidence item 1B17 and provide this item to the [redacted] immediately.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Action)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) (S) Writer requests FBI [redacted] perform an immediate latent prints exam and comparison, as detailed in above communication, and provide FBI Charlotte with results. For any questions or clarifications, please contact SA [redacted]
[redacted]

b6
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Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) For information.

b7E

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information.

b7E

Set Lead 5: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information.

b7E

(U) LATENT PRINTS

♦♦

A REPORT OF THE CSIS HOMELAND SECURITY
AND COUNTERTERRORISM PROGRAM AND
THE CSIS TRANSNATIONAL THREATS PROJECT

A Threat Transformed

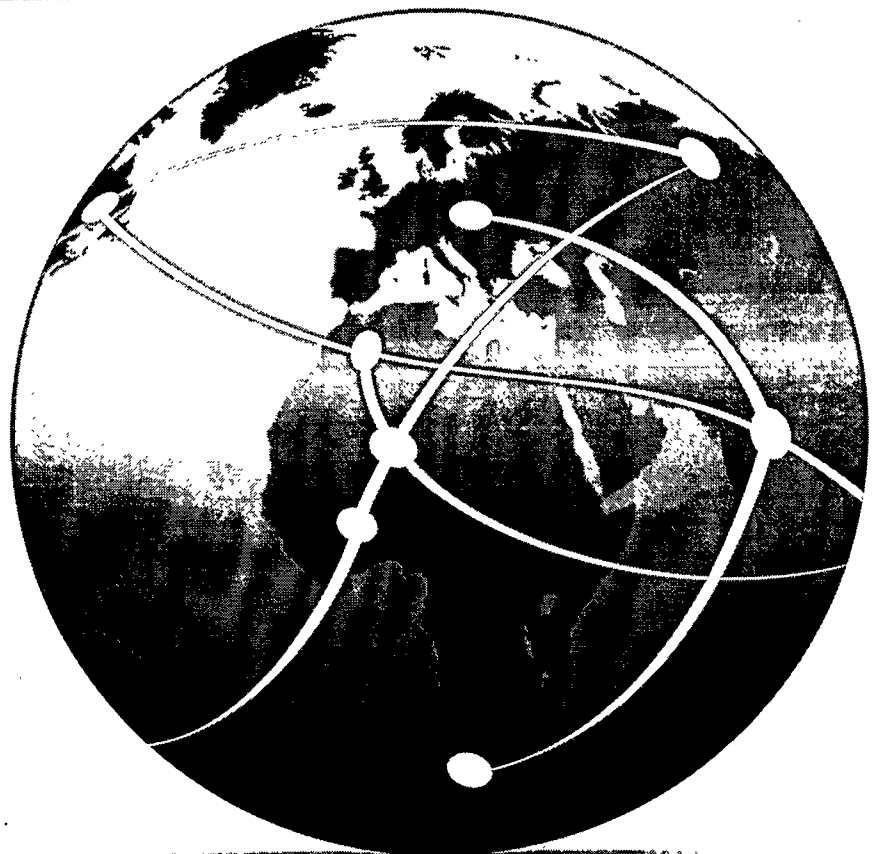
AL QALDA AND ASSOCIATED MOVEMENTS IN 2011

Principal Authors

Rick "Ozzie" Nelson
Thomas M. Sanderson

Contributing Authors

Amrit Bagia
Ben Bodurian
David A. Gordon



February 2011

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC &
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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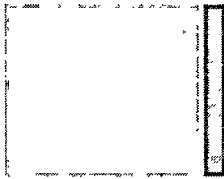
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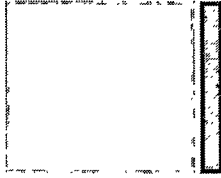
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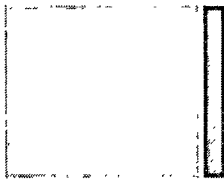
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PROJECT BACKGROUND

The AQAM Futures Project is a joint study undertaken by the CSIS Transnational Threats Project and the CSIS Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Program. The initiative will produce a series of “alternative futures” regarding the state of al Qaeda and Associated Movements in the year 2025 and generate recommendations to defeat the threat over the long term. Drawing on historical analysis, social science research, expert interviews, and targeted fieldwork, this effort will provide policymakers and strategists a vision beyond the next few years and consider the trends and shocks that may shape AQAM over the next decade and a half.

Interim deliverables will include this assessment, a podcast series providing updates on the project, insights from the field, and other relevant content. The study will culminate in a final report that will be released in September 2011 during a capstone conference examining the evolving AQAM threat and ongoing efforts to defeat it.

A distinguished group of former counterterrorism practitioners and experts serve on the project’s Senior Advisory Group (SAG). Led by Juan Zarate, former deputy national security adviser for combating terrorism, the SAG provides guidance and substantive input to the research team. Arnaud de Borchgrave, director of the CSIS Transnational Threats Project, serves as senior adviser to the study.

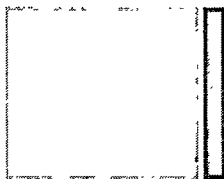
This project is codirected by Rick “Ozzie” Nelson, director of the CSIS Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Program, and Thomas M. Sanderson, deputy director of the CSIS Transnational Threats Project.

The U.S. Department of Defense and the National Security Coordination Secretariat of Singapore are the primary supporters of this effort.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIAI	al-Ittihad al Islami
AQAM	al Qaeda and Associated Movements
AQAP	al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
AQI	al Qaeda in Iraq
AQIM	al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
ETIM	East Turkestan Islamic Movement
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GSPC	Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat
IJU	Islamic Jihad Union
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate
Ji	Jemaah Islamiyah
LeT	Lashkar-e-Taiba
LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
TTP	Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Al Qaeda today poses a far different threat from that posed on September 11, 2001. What was once a hierarchical organization composed of Osama bin Laden and his close associates has grown to include an array of regional terrorist groups, small cells, and even individuals. This report terms these entities Al Qaeda and Associated Movements, or AQAM.

AQAM has three basic tiers. Bin Laden and his close associates comprise *al Qaeda core*, the group responsible for 9/11 and now based in western Pakistan. *Al Qaeda affiliates and like-minded groups* is a broad category that includes al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), al Shabaab, and several other regional terrorist organizations. *Al Qaeda-inspired non-affiliated cells and individuals* is a diffuse tier comprising radicalized groups and individuals that are not regularly affiliated with, but draw clear inspiration and occasional guidance from, the core and affiliates.

AQAM's constituent parts retain operational independence and are often motivated by unique local concerns. Still, these disparate elements exhibit a degree of ideological coherence. In some form, all members of AQAM agree that violent struggle, which is often directed against the West, is necessary to catalyzing an Islamic spiritual revival. AQAM, then, is a decentralized movement comprising a diverse set of subcomponents.

The transformation of the al Qaeda threat into a broader movement has important implications for U.S. and international counterterrorism strategy. First, the diffusion of global Islamist terrorism has greatly complicated the work of policymakers and national security practitioners. Al Qaeda core, while operationally diminished, plays an active role within the syndicate of armed groups active in Pakistan and Afghanistan, often facilitating attacks that it could not perpetrate alone. Emerging affiliates pose a range of threats; in less than a year, AQAP attempted two attacks on the U.S. homeland, and Lashkar-e-Taiba, in carrying out the 2008 Mumbai bombings, provoked further military tensions between Pakistan and India. Nonaffiliated cells and individuals, while mostly unsophisticated, represent a unique threat; "homegrown" extremists—that is, those who tend to be legal U.S. or European residents or citizens that possess certain qualities, including legal status and language and cultural skills—could enable domestic attacks.

The emergence of affiliates and nonaffiliated cells and individuals also presents a troubling paradox for the United States and its partners: despite extensive counterterrorism successes against the group responsible for 9/11, the al Qaeda "brand" now resonates with an increasingly diverse (though still narrow) cross-section of Muslims around the world. Indeed, bin Laden and other senior leaders have seized on the presence of U.S. and allied forces in Muslim-majority countries, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, to underscore al Qaeda's stock narrative that the West is at war with Islam. That narrative is central to the shared ideology that unifies AQAM's disparate components.

The continued relevance of AQAM's ideology goes hand in hand with the advent of the Internet—particularly innovations in peer-to-peer technologies—as a facilitator of global Islamist terrorism. YouTube videos and online chat-rooms now help disseminate AQAM's ideology to far-flung audiences, thus reducing the importance of in-person interaction as a driver of radicalization. This development only adds to the diffusion and complexity of global Islamist terrorism: policymakers must now counter extremism in virtual, rather than merely physical, realms.

If one word describes the cumulative effect of these developments, it is change. How and why AQAM might continue to transform—and whether it will even endure—will determine the future of counterterrorism policy. This report examines the nature of these changes and lays the foundation for a larger, year-long study that will forecast the nature of AQAM in 2025.



INTRODUCTION

On September 11, 2001, the terrorist group al Qaeda launched an attack that killed more Americans on U.S. soil than the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Nearly a decade later, that organization and its leader, Osama bin Laden, remain dangerous.¹ But al Qaeda has evolved and grown to include threats outside bin Laden's core group. Today's al Qaeda threat is more complex and diffuse than in 2001. It emanates from bin Laden's group, from al Qaeda affiliates and like-minded networks that support bin Laden's agenda, and from nonaffiliated cells and individuals inspired by al Qaeda and its affiliates. Together, these entities constitute al Qaeda and Associated Movements, or AQAM. It is this combination of three constituent parts that makes AQAM distinct from its antecedent. Understanding the implications of this transformation is key to combating the current AQAM threat.

A Foundation for Forward-Looking Analysis

This report provides the foundation for a larger, year-long study that will forecast the nature and evolution of AQAM—including its geographic reach, its operational capabilities, and the relative threats posed by constituent elements—in 2025. The goal is to enable governments to constrain and counteract global Islamist terrorist threats more proactively. This effort entails gaining a keener sense of where these threats will be most prevalent in the coming years and what tools can be applied by state and nongovernmental actors to defeat AQAM.

The first section deals with the evolution of bin Laden's core organization, beginning in the 1990s. Section two describes the rise of al Qaeda affiliates and nonaffiliated cells and individuals after 9/11. Section three examines the AQAM threat today.

Every effort has been made to discuss these developments chronologically. For analytical clarity, AQAM has been grouped into three tiers: *al Qaeda core*, *al Qaeda affiliates and like-minded groups*, and *al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals*. Although categorizing a diverse set of movements in this fashion carries certain drawbacks, it is necessary for a study of this breadth. Please refer to textbox 1 for a detailed explanation of the reasoning behind this decision.

1. According to unnamed intelligence officials, bin Laden directed unspecified affiliates and partners to use gunmen to open fire in tourist centers and take over hotels in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The attacks would have mimicked the November 2008 terrorist attacks that paralyzed Mumbai, India. See Dina Temple-Raston, "Bin Laden Told Partners to Plan Mumbai-Like Attacks," NPR, September 30, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=130242602>.

Parsing AQAM

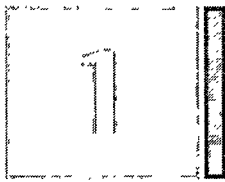
Because *al Qaeda* can be used to describe many things at once, the term often lacks specificity. Stating that an individual or group is part of *al Qaeda* could mean a number of different things depending on context. Inaccurate reporting and the tendency of some governments and analysts to conflate unrelated expressions of Islamism with the movement led by Osama bin Laden have made the term *al Qaeda* even less specific than it already was. To avoid ambiguity, the authors will employ the following terminology throughout this analysis:

Al Qaeda core includes Osama bin Laden and the cluster of ideologues, field commanders, and facilitators who have sworn *bayat* (an oath of allegiance) to him.

Al Qaeda affiliates and like-minded groups encompasses both “official” *al Qaeda* affiliates that have formally merged with the core, such as *al Qaeda* in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and groups that have links to *al Qaeda* core but retain ideological and operational independence, like *al Shabaab* in Somalia.

Al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals comprises radicalized groups and individuals that are not regularly affiliated with, but draw clear inspiration and occasional guidance from, the core or affiliated movements. Examples include Abdul Basheer Abdul Kader, a self-radicalized citizen of Singapore, who attempted to travel to Pakistan to receive training before fighting in Afghanistan; five young men from Northern Virginia who sought to join the Taliban; and the would-be Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad.

Together, these three tiers constitute *al Qaeda and Associated Movements*. The AQAM construct is not meant to imply a homogeneous, coherent group of *al Qaeda* terrorists. As discussed on page 12, there are important differences within AQAM.



FROM THE EARLY 1990s TO THE EARLY 2000s THE EVOLUTION OF AL QAEDA CORE

During the 1990s, al Qaeda built alliances with other militant Islamist groups and launched a series of high-profile attacks, thus establishing itself as an increasingly formidable terrorist organization.¹ The 9/11 attacks represented the culmination of these efforts. They also presaged a shift in focus among al Qaeda's associates; in subsequent years, many of these formal and informal affiliates have increasingly targeted the United States and its Western allies, in addition to local Muslim governments. This section describes the rise of al Qaeda core and how its seminal attack on the U.S. homeland foretold a strategic innovation in global Islamist terrorism.

Bin Laden and other future leaders of al Qaeda famously participated in the resistance movements to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan during the 1980s, along with the power struggles following Moscow's withdrawal in 1989.² Despite having had little impact on the outcome, bin Laden and his followers claimed credit for the Red Army's defeat and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union. They would later seize on this narrative as proof that they could confront a global superpower like the United States.

In the ensuing years, al Qaeda began building alliances with militant groups in a number of other Muslim countries. While in Sudan in 1994, bin Laden established the Islamic Army Shura, bringing together groups from Algeria, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Tunisia.³ Around the same time, he forged less formal ties to militants in Burma, Chad, Malaysia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Thailand, and Uganda.⁴ In addition to these relationships, bin Laden also extended direct assistance to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf Group, both located in the southern Philippines; Jemaah Islamiyah, based in Indonesia; and rebels in Tajikistan.⁵

Over time, then, al Qaeda's relationships and financial patronage expanded into Africa, the Balkans, Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia, the United States, and Western Europe.⁶ These affiliations linked al Qaeda to several successful terrorist plots in the early to mid-1990s, although there is disagreement over the extent of al Qaeda's direct involvement.⁷ According to one analyst, the group's organizational strategy was to assemble a coalition of regional militant groups and

1. *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York, N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 58–70.

2. *Ibid.*, 55–57.

3. *Ibid.*, 58.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, 57–59.

7. *The 9/11 Commission Report* linked al Qaeda to the 1992 bombing of a hotel in Aden used by U.S. forces in transit to Somalia, the attack on U.S. forces on the streets of Mogadishu in 1993 known as the Blackhawk Down engagement, and two bombings in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996 (*ibid.*, 59–60). Bruce Riedel, however, argues that there is insufficient evidence to implicate al Qaeda in these attacks; see Bruce Riedel, *The Search for Al Qaeda* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2008), 50–51.

"point all the players in one direction (via propaganda, technical assistance, broad strategic direction, and occasional direct guidance)."⁸

As al Qaeda consolidated its partnerships, it also bolstered its own military capacity. Thousands of fighters passed through the network of training camps in Afghanistan supported by bin Laden, and the most promising cadres were selected and indoctrinated into his organization.⁹ The administration of this force was highly bureaucratic. Al Qaeda had a constitution and by-laws,¹⁰ a leadership council, and committees dedicated to military affairs, politics, information, administration, security, and surveillance.¹¹

Al Qaeda distinguished itself from other Islamist militants by arguing for a reorientation of Islamist terrorism. Traditionally, militant Islamist groups had looked to overthrow strong-armed heads of state to establish sovereign territory governed by Sharia, or Islamic law.¹² Rather, bin Laden contended, al Qaeda and its affiliates should look to attack the United States and its Western allies directly.¹³ According to bin Laden, Western governments propped up Muslim leaders, offering them critical military and financial support; decisive terrorist attacks directed at the United States and its allies might convince them to withdraw such assistance, thus leaving Muslim governments more vulnerable to attack by al Qaeda and its affiliates and clearing the way for the imposition of Sharia.¹⁴

In this vein, bin Laden issued fatwas, or Islamic religious rulings, in 1996 and 1998, declaring war on the United States and decrying its use of Saudi Arabia as a military base during the first Gulf War and its support for Israel.¹⁵ Months after the 1998 fatwa, al Qaeda planned, financed, and launched its first major attacks against the United States. On August 7, two near-simultaneous car bombs struck the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, killing more than 200 people.¹⁶ Just over two years after the embassy bombings, al Qaeda successfully carried out its second direct attack against an American target. On October 12, 2000, al Qaeda terrorists maneuvered a small boat packed with explosives into the USS *Cole* as it sat in the Port of Aden. The blast killed 17 U.S. sailors and wounded around 40.¹⁷ As the 2000s began, al Qaeda had convincingly established itself as a new kind of Islamist terrorist group intent on striking a different kind of target.

8. David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 14.

9. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 67.

10. Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 2007), 162.

11. *Ibid.*, 162–63.

12. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 50–51.

13. *Ibid.*, 54.

14. Osama bin Laden, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," *Al Quds Al Arabi*, August 1996, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html; and "Jihad against Jews and Crusaders Issued by the World Islamic Front," in *The Cannons of Jihad*, ed. Jim Lacey (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 1–3.

15. *Ibid.* See also Osama bin Laden, text of fatwa urging jihad against Americans, *Al Quds Al Arabi*, February 23, 1998, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html.

16. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 68–70.

17. Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, 190.

9/11 and the Hunt for al Qaeda Core

It was with this structure, global vision, and escalating lethality and reach that al Qaeda launched the September 11 terrorist attacks. Because other studies, particularly the 9/11 Commission Report, cover the events in exhaustive detail, they are only briefly reviewed here. Bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri, his deputy, and other close associates were able to effectively plan and execute a series of attacks that involved 19 operatives and killed almost 3,000 people.¹⁸ The United States responded to 9/11 far more aggressively than to previous attacks, like the African embassy and USS *Cole* bombings, which the Clinton administration had countered mostly with airstrikes.¹⁹ In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, President George Bush ordered the director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to “launch a covert war against al Qaeda and its Taliban supporters.”²⁰ Washington inserted small groups of CIA paramilitary officers, supported by special operations forces, which effectively partnered with indigenous Afghan elements.²¹ Combined with the precision and potency of American aircraft, this hybrid force began rooting out al Qaeda core and its Taliban allies.²²

Following the collapse of the Taliban regime, al Qaeda core retreated into the mountains of eastern Afghanistan, where it was pursued by coalition forces. After engagements at Tora Bora in early December 2001 and the Shah-i-Kot Mountains in March 2002, surviving members of al Qaeda core, including bin Laden and Zawahiri, fled Afghanistan to Pakistan.²³

The U.S.-led assault on Afghanistan severely degraded al Qaeda core. By one estimate, nearly 80 percent of the group’s fighters in Afghanistan were killed within the first two months of the campaign.²⁴ Bin Laden’s network of guest houses and training camps was destroyed, and information gathered from these sites and gleaned from the interrogation of captured fighters provided actionable intelligence that further aided the pursuit of terrorists in the region.²⁵

The continued program of kinetic pressure, combined with multilateral initiatives to constrain the core’s ability to raise and transfer money, severely limited the group’s capacity to train and conduct attacks.²⁶ Non-Western countries played a role, too. In 2002 and 2003, for instance, Pakistani officials captured several al Qaeda core figures, among them the mastermind of 9/11, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad.²⁷ Iran also arrested a group of high-ranking al Qaeda core members that had fled from Afghanistan. Among these individuals were Saif al-Adel, al Qaeda’s core’s military

18. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Executive Summary*, 1–2.

19. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 115–121.

20. Henry Crumpton, “Intelligence and War: Afghanistan, 2001–2002,” in *Transforming U.S. Intelligence*, ed. Jennifer Sims and Burton Gerber (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 162.

21. “United States Special Operations Command History: 1987–2007,” U.S. Special Operations Command, 87–93.

22. *Ibid.*

23. For a detailed account of bin Laden and Zawahiri’s escape from Tora Bora, see Peter Bergen, “The Battle for Tora Bora: How Osama bin Laden Slipped from Our Grasp: The Definitive Account,” *New Republic*, December 22, 2009, <http://www.tnr.com/article/the-battle-tora-bora?page=0,5>.

24. Lawrence Wright, “The Master Plan,” *New Yorker*, September 11, 2006, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/09/11/060911fa_fact3.

25. Crumpton, “Intelligence and War,” 162.

26. Greg Bruno, “Al-Qaeda’s Financial Pressures,” Council on Foreign Relations, February 1, 2010, http://www.cfr.org/publication/21347/alqaedas_financial_pressures.html.

27. Kenneth Katzman, “Al Qaeda: Profile and Threat Assessment,” Congressional Research Service, August 17, 2005, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/56106.pdf>; and Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between the Mosque and Military* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 306.

commander; Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, a spokesman for the group; and Saad bin Laden, Osama bin Laden's son.²⁸

Despite these efforts, many senior leaders remained at large. The failure to capture or kill bin Laden and Zawahiri, in particular, allowed the two men to remain potent strategic and symbolic figures within AQAM.²⁹ In the subsequent years, the global Islamist terrorist threat changed in important ways. During this time, an array of formal and informal al Qaeda affiliates, along with clusters of nonaffiliated cells and individuals, emerged as increasingly significant threats to U.S. and global security. The next section explores this transformation.

28. Faye Bowers, "Iran Holds Al Qaeda's Top Leaders," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 28, 2003, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0728/p01s02-wome.html>.

29. John Kerry, "Tora Bora Revisited: How We Failed to Get bin Laden and Why It Matters Today," report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, November 30, 2009, 10–20, <http://foreign.senate.gov/reports/download/?id=30753123-b747-4b7c-83fb-d350cc0aacef>.

2

THE RISE OF THE REST

THE EMERGENCE OF AL QAEDA AFFILIATES, LIKE-MINDED GROUPS, AND NONAFFILIATED CELLS AND INDIVIDUALS DURING THE 2000s

As the United States and its partners degraded bin Laden's core organization throughout the 2000s, policymakers became increasingly focused on an emerging set of formal and informal al Qaeda affiliates. Some of these elements had been active since the 1990s but had received less attention from American policymakers focused on al Qaeda core. Other groups rose to prominence in reaction to U.S. or allied counterterrorism operations. Along the way, bin Laden and his associates consciously worked to build or sustain alliances with these organizations.

Toward the end of the decade, policymakers grew more concerned about cells and individuals that were not regularly associated with al Qaeda or its affiliates but that drew clear inspiration, and occasional guidance and support, from the groups.¹ This development, along with the rise of formal and informal affiliates, marked a definitive shift in the nature of al Qaeda; it was now more appropriate to conceptualize it as a movement, or AQAM. How exactly did this transformation occur?

Although the initial response to 9/11 focused primarily on al Qaeda core in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a series of plots soon made it clear that other Islamist terrorist groups posed important threats. One of the most notable of these plots unfolded on October 12, 2002, when Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), a Southeast Asian Islamist terrorist group, launched the deadliest attack in Indonesian history. Exactly two years after the USS *Cole* attack, JI operatives detonated sequential backpack and car bombs in a crowded tourist area of Bali, an Indonesian island, killing 202 people.²

JI's relationship with al Qaeda core had roots in the late 1980s and flourished during the 1990s. The 9/11 Commission Report notes that by 1998, JI and al Qaeda core had reached an agreement whereby the former "would perform necessary casing activities and locate bomb-making materials and other supplies," while the latter "would underwrite operations, provide bomb-making expertise,

1. A number of recent plots have involved individuals who were not formal members of al Qaeda core or its affiliates but who received a measure of direction or support from these organizations. These individuals should be viewed as like-minded "free agents" rather than as fully associated and controlled operatives. Examples of such cases include the so-called Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad, who received limited training and funds from the Pakistani Taliban, as well as a group centered around Najibullah Zazi, who sought to attack the New York City subway system after receiving training and direction from al Qaeda core in Pakistan. While both had contact with al Qaeda core or an affiliate, neither was an active organizational member. See "Faisal Shahzad Indicted for Attempted Car Bombing in Times Square," Department of Justice press release, June 17, 2010, <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/June/10-ag-713.html>; and William Rashbuan and Karen Zraick, "Government Says Al Qaeda Ordered N.Y. Plot," *New York Times*, April 23, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/nyregion/24zari.html>.

2. "Bali Death Toll Set at 202," BBC News, February 19, 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/2778923.stm>.

and deliver suicide operatives.”³ This support continued after 9/11; according to one JI operative detained in August 2003, al Qaeda core provided \$30,000 to fund the Bali attacks.⁴

As described in the first section, the relationship between JI and al Qaeda core was one of many partnerships that bin Laden forged with smaller regional terrorist groups during the 1990s. Following 9/11, al Qaeda core maintained loose affiliations with several other organizations, many of which included foreign fighters who had opposed Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Among these groups were the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which had been an active Taliban ally;⁵ the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), whose focus is Western China; al-Ittihad al Islami (AIAI), a now-defunct Somali terrorist group responsible for the 2002 attacks in Mombasa, Kenya;⁶ and the Abu Sayyaf Group, which is based in the southern Philippines.

As al Qaeda core faced an ongoing, post-9/11 global counterterrorism assault, these affiliates played a crucial role in keeping bin Laden’s organization relevant. Groups like JI and AIAI became responsible for a larger share of Islamist terrorist attacks. Al Qaeda core understood this transition and, as seen in the 2002 Bali bombings, actively encouraged and enabled local groups to execute attacks. Bin Laden seized on these operations to aggrandize the core’s own influence. In a December 2002 speech, he categorized such attacks as part of a monolithic campaign against the United States and its partners conducted by the “zealous sons of Islam.”⁷ As bin Laden saw it, al Qaeda was now acting as the vanguard force that he and his cohorts had originally envisioned.

The rise of regional affiliates continued during the middle of the decade. One of the most violent of these groups came about because of the American invasion of Iraq. Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) emerged from the chaos of the Sunni insurgency. Under the leadership of the Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the group soon earned a reputation for its particularly brutal suicide bombings and assassinations. Aside from its frequent attacks in Iraq, the group also gained notoriety for its October 2004 formal declaration of allegiance to bin Laden.⁸ The partnership preceded another merger nearly two years later, when the Algerian-based Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) recast itself as al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) after officially joining al Qaeda core in September 2006, becoming the second formal al Qaeda affiliate.⁹

Other formal and informal affiliates emerged later in the decade. In Yemen, a February 2006 prison break freed 23 militants and eventually led to the unification of disparate Saudi and Yemeni terrorist cells under the banner of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). In January 2009, AQAP’s leader, Nasir al-Wuhaysi, declared the group’s formal allegiance to the core. Since then, AQAP has claimed responsibility for at least two major plots directed at the U.S. homeland: the

3. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 151.

4. Simon Elegant, “The Terrorist Talks,” *TIME*, October 5, 2003, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,493256,00.html>.

5. Thomas Sanderson, Daniel Kimmage, and David Gordon, *From the Ferghana Valley to South Waziristan: The Evolving Threat of Central Asian Jihadists* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2010), 7, http://csis.org/files/publication/100324_Sanderson_FerghanaValley_WEB_0.pdf.

6. “Al Qaeda Claims Credit for Kenya Attacks,” CNN, December 2, 2002, http://articles.cnn.com/2002-12-02/world/kenya.probe_1_kenyans-and-three-israelis-al-qaeda-israeli-charter-jet/2?_s=PM:WORLD.

7. “Full Text: ‘Bin Laden’s Message,’” BBC News World Edition, November 12, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2455845.stm.

8. Mary Anne Weaver, “Inventing al-Zarqawi,” *Atlantic Monthly* (Jul/Aug 2006), 98–99.

9. Souad Mekhennet, Michael Moss, Eric Schmitt, Elaine Sciolino, and Margot Williams, “A Threat Renewed: Ragtag Insurgency Gains a Lifeline from Al Qaeda,” *New York Times*, July 1, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/01/world/africa/01algeria.html?pagewanted=1>.

December 25, 2009, attempted bombing of a transatlantic flight bound for Detroit and the October 2010 plan to ship explosives to the United States on cargo planes.¹⁰ These events have led some American officials to describe AQAP “as a more potent threat” than al Qaeda core.¹¹

Like AQAP, al Shabaab, a Somali insurgent group, has taken on a transnational dimension. Since 2006, al Shabaab has been waging a nationally focused insurgency to expel African Union peacekeepers and overthrow Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government, which succeeded Mogadishu’s previous government, the deposed Islamic Courts Union. While the group is thought to be focused mostly on internal matters, it pledged support for al Qaeda core’s agenda in February 2010.¹² Perhaps most startling, al Shabaab recruited a number of individuals from the large Somali diaspora community living in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Beginning around 2007, as many as two dozen U.S.-based Somalis traveled to Mogadishu to join the group.¹³ Among these individuals was Shirwa Ahmed, who became the first U.S. citizen to conduct a suicide bombing.¹⁴ Even though none of these Western recruits has carried out attacks in Western countries, al Shabaab’s ability to tap into diaspora communities and its July 2010 attack in Kampala, Uganda, suggest the group poses a threat beyond Somalia.

Throughout the decade, Al Qaeda core also began consolidating alliances closer to its base in western Pakistan. In the aftermath of 9/11, Pakistani President Musharraf opted to side with the United States publicly. Behind the scenes, however, Pakistan’s intelligence service, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), maintained ties with numerous militant proxies, among them the Haqqani Network and surviving leaders of the Quetta Shura Taliban. Despite this hedge, President Musharraf’s open support for the U.S.-led crackdown provoked several Pakistani militant groups, pitting them against Islamabad and its American allies.

This realignment had important implications for bin Laden’s organization. As al Qaeda core established a new safe haven in western Pakistan, the group exploited President Musharraf’s unpopular support for U.S. counterterrorism efforts to consolidate or establish relationships with a wider range of partners.¹⁵ A series of peace deals struck between the Pakistani government and tribal leaders in Waziristan beginning in 2004 led to the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from the area. The withdrawals provided legitimacy and valuable breathing room for al Qaeda core and aligned groups, allowing them to reconstitute training camps and operational capabilities.¹⁶

10. Jon Alterman and Rick “Ozzie” Nelson, “AQAP in Yemen,” *CSIS Critical Questions*, November 5, 2010, <http://csis.org/publication/aqap-yemen>.

11. Greg Miller and Peter Finn, “CIA Sees Increased Threat for al-Qaeda in Yemen,” *Washington Post*, August 24, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/24/AR2010082406553.html>.

12. “Somali Islamists al-Shabab ‘join al-Qaeda fight,’” *BBC News*, February 1, 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8491329.stm>.

13. Dina Temple-Raston, “Al-Shabab Becomes Magnet for Would-Be Jihadists,” *NPR*, August 6, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=129021164>.

14. Spencer Hsu and Carrie Johnson, “Somali American Recruited by Extremists: U.S. Cites Case of Minnesotan Killed in Suicide Blast in Africa,” *Washington Post*, March 11, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/10/AR2009031003901.html>.

15. Shuja Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2009), 26, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081218_nawaz_fata_web.pdf.

16. C. Christine Fair and Seth G. Jones, “Pakistan’s War Within,” *Survival* 51, no. 6 (December 2009–January 2010): 171.

The confrontation between militants and the Pakistani government intensified and widened following the siege of Islamabad's Red Mosque in 2007. This escalation encouraged disparate groups to align against the Pakistani state, drawing them into the orbit of al Qaeda core. By the mid- to late 2000s, bin Laden's organization had grown into an important force multiplier in the loose syndicate of insurgent, terrorist, and criminal groups that operate within Pakistan and across the Durand Line in Afghanistan.¹⁷ By virtue of colocation, shared infrastructure, and operational cooperation, al Qaeda core maintains closer alliances within this syndicate than with any other set of groups.

Alliance Building in Perspective

Such formal and informal mergers raise vexing questions for U.S. counterterrorism officials and their international partners. What does it mean for a terrorist group in Iraq or North Africa to have a formal alliance with al Qaeda core, which is based in South Asia? What benefits do such partnerships confer on the respective groups? Above all, what do the changing relationships within AQAM mean for U.S. and allied counterterrorism efforts?

It is important to note the tremendous diversity within the set of formal and informal alliances that al Qaeda core has cultivated. No two relationships developed for the same reasons, and some affiliates, like JI and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), have turned away from the core in recent years.¹⁸ Still, at least a few common themes run throughout al Qaeda core's alliance building. Affiliates have seemed to proclaim allegiance to bin Laden to gain a certain notoriety associated with al Qaeda core, which after 9/11 solidified its reputation as the most infamous global terrorist group. Alliance building has also allowed regional affiliates and like-minded groups to tap into new sources of training, funding, and recruits. Even if such groups do not share the core's global ideology, al Qaeda's imprimatur might confer both intangible and concrete benefits to their mostly local agendas.¹⁹

For bin Laden's organization, networking and alliance building have enabled a beleaguered group to sustain its mission and, to some extent, its operations. Al Qaeda affiliates appear increasingly intent on targeting Western interests, a trend that Thomas Hegghammer, an expert on violent Islamist ideology, has termed "ideological hybridization." Writing in 2009, Hegghammer argued that the distinctions between "revolutionary Islamists," focused on toppling "apostate" Muslim regimes, and "global jihadists," like al Qaeda, focused on attacking Western countries, had blurred. Now, typically parochial groups like AQIM were targeting Western and global institutions, as with the December 11, 2007, attack on the United Nations office in Algiers.²⁰

17. Al Qaeda core has provided a combination of training, explosives, strategic communications, and counterintelligence expertise to the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, the Haqqani Network, the Quetta Shura Taliban, and Lashkar-e-Taiba, as well as Pakistani-based sectarian groups and separatists. It also provides protection for South Asian criminal organizations involved in narcotics cultivation, kidnapping, and smuggling. See Haider Ali Hussein Mullick, "Al Qaeda and Pakistan: Current Role and Future Considerations," Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, October, 2010, 15–16, http://www.ispu.org/files/PDFs/Al_Qaeda_and_Pakistan_Report_-_Haider_Mullick.pdf.

18. See, for instance, Juan C. Zarate, "Al Qaeda in 2010: How Should the U.S. Respond?" statement before the House Armed Services Committee, January 27, 2010, http://csis.org/files/ts_100127_Zarate.pdf.

19. Daniel Byman, "Al Qaeda's M&A Strategy: Is Franchising a Successful Way to Build a Global Terror Network?" *Foreign Policy.com*, December 7, 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/12/07/al_qaedas_m_and_a_strategy?page=0,0.

20. Thomas Hegghammer, "The Ideological Hybridization of Jihadi Groups," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 9 (November 18, 2009).

Despite al Qaeda core's alliance building, the group has rarely exercised operational control over its affiliates. Bin Laden, in particular, has often been limited to the role of al Qaeda's "inciter-in-chief, not commander-in-chief."²¹ Even when the core sought an advisory role over its affiliates, in some instances, especially in the relationship between al Qaeda core and AQI, it seemed to have little influence. As criticism over AQI's excessive methods mounted, Zawahiri and a senior al Qaeda core leader identified only as "Atiyah" sent letters to Zarqawi urging him to exercise greater restraint.²² Zarqawi ignored these instructions.

Nonetheless, the rise of al Qaeda franchises and the geographic diffusion of Islamist terrorism have played a defining role in al Qaeda core's evolution into AQAM. That some of these regional networks are undergoing a process of ideological hybridization has ensured that AQAM retains, to varying degrees, bin Laden's focus on the West.

Beyond Terrorist Groups

Formal and informal affiliates are not the only entities that constitute AQAM. In the past few years, small cells and individuals that are not regularly affiliated with al Qaeda but that draw clear inspiration, and occasional guidance, from the core and its affiliates have emerged as salient actors in global Islamist terrorism. The trend is most pertinent in Europe and the United States, where would-be homegrown terrorists possess the sort of "insider" traits—legal status, fluency in Western languages, and cultural familiarity, among others—that could facilitate successful attacks in their home countries.

Shortly after 9/11, al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals garnered increased attention from U.S. and European counterterrorism officials. In September 2002, five Yemeni-American citizens were arrested in Lackawanna, New York, on charges that they and a sixth associate had provided material support to al Qaeda by attending one of the group's training camps in Afghanistan during the spring of 2001. Known as the "Lackawanna Six," the group, while not operationally active, raised fears about the emergence of al Qaeda-inspired American homegrown extremism in the post-9/11 era.²³ Around this same time in Europe, Dutch intelligence officials uncovered evidence that a loose group of individuals, eventually labeled by some authorities the "Hofstad Network," may have been planning terrorist attacks in the Netherlands.²⁴

In some cases, cells and individuals based in the United States and Europe have managed to link up with al Qaeda core, along with its formal and informal affiliates. The Minnesota Somalis

21. Michael Scheuer, "Coalition Warfare, Part II: How Zarqawi Fits into Bin Laden's World Front," *Jamestown Terrorism Focus* 2, no. 8 (April 28, 2005).

22. "Letter Exposes New Leader in Al-Qa'ida High Command," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, September 25, 2006, <http://ctc.usma.edu/harmony/pdf/CTC-AtiyahLetter.pdf>; "Zawahiri's Letter to Zarqawi," dated July 9, 2005, translated and accessed from "Harmony Project" of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, released October 11, 2005, <http://ctc.usma.edu/harmony/pdf/CTC-Zawahiri-Letter-10-05.pdf>.

23. See, for example, Matthew Purdy and Lowell Bergman, "Where the Trail Led: Between Evidence and Suspicion; Unclear Danger: Inside the Lackawanna Terror Case," *New York Times*, October 12, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/10/12/nyregion/where-trail-led-between-evidence-suspicion-unclear-danger-inside-lackawanna.html?scp=2&sq=Lackawanna+Six&st=nyt>.

24. See for example, Gregory Crouch "Netherlands Arrests 7 in Plot to Assassinate Top Politicians," *New York Times*, October 15, 2005, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E02E6DC143FF936A25753C1A9639C8B63&scp=1&sq=hofstad%20group&st=cse>.

stand as one example. In February 2010, Najibullah Zazi, an Afghan citizen and lawful U.S. permanent resident, pled guilty to terrorism charges after having been arrested the previous year when federal officials foiled his plan to bomb the New York subway system. Zazi had traveled to Pakistan to receive explosives and weapons training from al Qaeda core.²⁵ Just over two months after Zazi's conviction, in May U.S. citizen Faisal Shahzad was arrested following a failed attempt to detonate a car bomb in Times Square. Like Zazi, Shahzad had received terrorist training in Pakistan, although he worked with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) operatives.²⁶ In at least one instance, direct training appears not to have been necessary for perpetrating a successful attack; U.S. Army Major Nidal Hasan, the suspect in the November 2009 Fort Hood shootings, drew inspiration from radical Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, a key figure within AQAP, but is alleged to have acted alone.²⁷

These and other recent cases are part of an uptick in the number of U.S. legal residents and citizens implicated in extremist violence in the past few years.²⁸ As will be explored later, the trend appears to be tied to the resonance of al Qaeda's stock narrative of a war between the West and Islam. The increasing power of the Internet, both to disseminate propaganda and to forge connections between physically separate, like-minded individuals, also plays a role. Above all, the rise of al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals demonstrates just how much global Islamist terrorism, which once revolved around bin Laden and his close associates, has changed and become a broader movement in the past decade.

Ideological Affinity

The connective tissue that links the three tiers of AQAM, and the basis for identifying them as part of a movement, is ideological affinity. AQAM's components share an extreme interpretation of Sunni Islam grounded in the belief that the *ummah*, or Muslim community, is in a state of decay. The solution to this crisis lies in returning to the practices used during the times of the Prophet Muhammad and reestablishing Sharia. Furthermore, they believe that their enemies—be they “Zionist-Jewish Crusaders,” Hindus, or “apostates”—actively conspire to weaken the *ummah* and prevent the implementation of Sharia. Under these conditions, violent struggle becomes justifiable and obligatory to remove these deleterious influences and catalyze an Islamic revival.²⁹

25. William K. Rashbaum and Karen Zraick “Government Says Al Qaeda Ordered N.Y. Plot,” *New York Times*, April 23, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/nyregion/24zarien.html?adxnnl=1&ref=najibullahzazi&adxnnlx=1294074006-tRDwBG2BobJ6b6t9vWNRTg>.

26. Benjamin Weiser, “Call to Taliban after Bomb Attempt in Times Sq.,” *New York Times*, September 29, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/30/nyregion/30shahzad.html?ref=faisalshahzad>.

27. Jerome P. Bjelopera and Mark A. Randol, “American Jihadist Terrorism: Combating a Complex Threat,” Congressional Research Service, December 7, 2010, 34, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/153298.pdf>.

28. See Charles Kurzman, “Muslim-American Terrorism Since 9/11: An Accounting,” Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, February 2, 2011, http://sanford.duke.edu/centers/tcths/about/documents/Kurzman_Muslim-American_Terrorism_Since_911_An_Accounting.pdf. Kurzman identifies 67 total Muslim-American terrorist suspects and perpetrators in 2009 and 2010, compared to 94 total from 2001–2008 and just 50 from 2004–2008.

29. This is not to imply that every foot soldier and homegrown radical associated with AQAM has an in-depth understanding of ideology. This might be the case for intellectual and religiously literate cadres, but others are drawn to the movement by more simplistic narratives. These narratives are the “lowest common denominator of the various ideologies of global Islamist terrorism” and tend to inspire those who seek

Upon closer examination of the ideologies of AQAM's constituent parts, clear fissures emerge. Examples of such disagreements include the identity of the primary enemy, strategic approaches, and the "excommunication" and killing of Muslims, among other matters.³⁰ These disputes have plagued AQAM from the very beginning. When al Qaeda core was first created in the late 1980s, its founders differed over where the organization's efforts should be directed. Abdullah Azzam, an influential Islamist instrumental in bin Laden's rise, believed that the group should focus on freeing historically Muslim lands from "infidel" rulers, effectively concentrating on the periphery of the Muslim-majority world.³¹ The other camp, influenced heavily by Zawahiri, initially sought to use the organization to free Egypt and other Muslim lands from the grips of leaders that had strayed from the "true path" of Islam.³²

Even as a single, hierarchical group, therefore, al Qaeda core was subject to internal discord. As the organization expanded and morphed into a diversified movement, the frequency of these differences increased. In some cases, these disputes prompted entities to dissociate themselves from the movement or its ideological underpinnings. An example includes LIFG's 2009 recantation, which criticized the targeting of civilians and the violent overthrow of Muslim leaders, central tenants of bin Laden's ideology.³³

Although rifts within AQAM over strategy and tactics are significant, the groups' shared goal of purifying Islam through violent action helps them see past their differences. Cooperation within AQAM is also driven by common interests. Many actors within AQAM collaborate with one another due to overlapping short- and medium-term goals, which often relate to Western intervention, local regimes, and rival sectarian groups. These shared objectives downplay ideology in favor of pragmatism and are exemplified in the South Asia syndicate described in the third section.

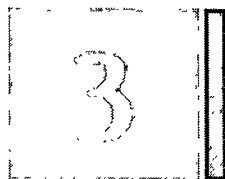
radical Islam for adventure, personal meaning, or redemption. See Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 114.

30. For a good accounting of this, see Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman, "Self-Inflicted Wounds: Debates and Divisions within al-Qa'ida and Its Periphery," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, December 16, 2010, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/Self-Inflicted%20Wounds.pdf>.

31. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 36.

32. Aryn Baker, "Who Killed Abdullah Azzam?" *TIME*, June 18, 2009, http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1902809_1902810_1905173-2,00.html.

33. See Nic Robertson and Paul Cruickshank, "New Jihad Code Threatens al Qaeda," CNN, November 10, 2009, http://articles.cnn.com/2009-11-09/world/libya.jihadi.code_1_jihad-libyan-islamic-fighting-group-qaeda?s=PM:WORLD; and Ian Black, "Libya's Jihadis Reject Violence as Leader Bids for Acceptance," *The Guardian*, September 4, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/sep/04/libyan-islamist-fighters-reject-violence>.



AQAM TODAY

In 2004, a Syrian-born militant and al Qaeda associate named Abu Musab al-Suri released a manifesto entitled “A Global Call to Islamic Resistance.” This 1,600-page tract candidly examined the historic failures of several Islamist terrorist groups and acknowledged that their hierarchical organization was problematic. Instead, al-Suri advocated a new model inspired by his concept of *nizal, la tanzim*, or system, not organization.¹

Al-Suri’s approach called for the integration of “secret bands of disconnected cells that are both varied and abundant”² into a global movement that could withstand penetration. Senior leaders would provide overall guidance to this movement and cede tactical authority to cell commanders.³ This movement would be completely decentralized, with nothing connecting its individual nodes besides “the common aim, a common name, the common doctrinal jihadi program, and a comprehensive educational program.”⁴ Even if al-Suri’s writing was not responsible, the transformation that he advocated has largely come to pass. AQAM today is a decentralized movement composed of diverse subcomponents drawn together by a shared set of goals grounded in a perversion of Sunni Islam.

Combating such a movement presents unique analytic challenges. This section assesses the current threat that AQAM poses to the United States and its partners in a manner that appreciates the inherent complexities of a decentralized movement composed of varied elements. It begins by exploring the dangers emanating from AQAM’s three constituent parts and concludes by evaluating the dynamics shaping the overall movement.

The Current Threat from al Qaeda Core

Although still intent on striking the West directly, al Qaeda core’s ability to plan, finance, and execute attacks on Western targets has decreased since 9/11. Bin Laden’s organization does play an active role in the loose syndicate of armed groups that operate in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but its direct contributions to global Islamist terrorism should not be overstated.⁵ Much of al Qaeda

1. Brynjar Lia, “The al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus’ab al-Suri: A Profile,” Norwegian Defense Research Establishment, March 15, 2006, 17, http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00076/_The_Al-Qaida_strate_76568a.pdf.

2. Jim Lacey, *A Terrorist’s Call to Global Jihad: Deciphering Abu Musab al-Suri’s Islamic Jihad Manifesto* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 28.

3. Lia, “The al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus’ab al-Suri.”

4. Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus’ab Al-Suri* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 2008), 445.

5. In June 2010, CIA director Leon Panetta estimated that there were only 50 to 100 al Qaeda core members left in Afghanistan, while National Counterterrorism Center director Michael Leiter has stated that there are roughly 300 members in Pakistan. This diminished local capacity was evidenced when, in plot-

core's day-to-day attention is reportedly focused on survival, leaving little available bandwidth for operations.⁶

The group's most significant contribution to global Islamist terrorism today comes in the form of ideological direction and inspiration. As the innovator that directed global Islamist terrorism against Western interests, or the "far enemy," bin Laden maintains his symbolic value as a figure-head. Accordingly, his statements and those issued by his deputies still carry significant weight in militant circles.⁷

The Current Threat from al Qaeda Affiliates and Like-Minded Groups

Al Qaeda core's formal and informal affiliates pose a variety of local, regional, and, at times, global threats. For the purposes of this study, "threat" is gauged by evaluating a group's capabilities and intentions. Capabilities in turn are measured along three dimensions: a group's ability to strike Western targets, its ability to inspire others to plot or act in support of AQAM's agenda, and its capacity to destabilize a particular region. Intentions are determined by assessing how a group allocates its finite resources. Is the bulk of its attacks and plots directed against the West, local regimes, or rival sectarian groups?

Based on this analytic framework, three subsets emerge among al Qaeda-linked groups: those that possess neither the capability nor the intention to strike Western targets or destabilize a region; those that possess the intention to strike Western interests or undermine regional stability but lack the capability; and those that possess both the capability and the intention for such

ting the suicide attack that killed seven CIA officers in Khost on December 30, 2009, al Qaeda was forced to rely heavily on the Haqqani network and the Pakistani Taliban for operational and logistical support. It appears that al Qaeda core currently possesses the motivation for continued attacks but is constrained by a limited capability to operate independently. See *This Week* transcript "Panetta," ABC, June 27, 2010, <http://abcnews.go.com/ThisWeek/week-transcript-panetta/story?id=11025299>; David Sanger and Mark Mazzetti, "New Estimate of Strength of Al Qaeda Is Offered," *New York Times*, June 30, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/01/world/asia/01qaeda.html>; and "Video: CIA Bomber, Jordan Doctor Humam Khalil Abu Mual al-Balawi, Calls for Jihadist Attacks on U.S.," Associated Press, January 9, 2010, http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/2010/01/09/2010-01-09_video_cia_bomber_jordan_doctor_humam_khalil_abu_mual_al_balawi_calls_for_jihadis.html.

6. John Rollins, "Al Qaeda and Affiliates: Historical Perspective, Global Presence, and Implications for U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, February 5, 2010, 2, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R41070.pdf>.

7. A number of terrorist plots appear to have been directly inspired by statements made by al Qaeda core members, including multiple attempted attacks against a Danish cartoonist and newspaper for publishing depictions of the Prophet Mohammed. Further, numerous groups, including AQI, AQIM, AQAP, and Al Shabaab continue to pledge loyalty to bin Laden, reference al Qaeda core in their statements, and generally adhere to bin Laden's established ideology, an indicator that the core has maintained influence within AQAM despite a limited ability to conduct operations itself. See Michael Leiter, "Looming Challenges in the War on Terror," remarks before the Washington Institute, February 13, 2008, http://www.nctc.gov/press_room/speeches/wash-inst-written-sfr-final.pdf; Firouz Sedarat, "Al Qaeda Video Vows More Denmark Attacks," Reuters, September 5, 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL562398920080905>; Tracy McVeigh, "Assassin Shot in Cartoonist's Home Has Links to al-Qaeda, Say Police," *The Observer*, January 3, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jan/03/kurt-westergaard-cartoon-muhammad-denmark>; Rollins, "Al Qaeda and Affiliates."

actions. Little evidence suggests that al Qaeda affiliates possess that capability but lack violent intention. Of course, capabilities and intentions can change over time; the assessment that follows provides a snapshot of the threats posed by formal and informal affiliates today.

Relatively small networks, such as ETIM, fall into the first subset. They remain focused on local regimes and often have less formal ties to bin Laden's organization.⁸ While they launch periodic attacks, these groups do not present a direct threat to the United States and the West, nor do they seem capable of causing regional instability.

Groups such as AQIM and the Islamic Jihad Union, an IMU splinter implicated in the 2007 plot to attack the U.S. airbase in Ramstein, Germany, constitute the second subset.⁹ Should the operational capabilities of these groups increase, they would become a more significant threat to the United States and its partners. AQIM's role in the transshipment of narcotics from West Africa to Europe, therefore, is a very disturbing trend, as it could provide the necessary financial resources to bolster the group's operations.¹⁰

The third subset contains a range of affiliates that present varying, and sometimes unique, threats. AQI seems unable to launch attacks on the U.S. homeland, but because of the large U.S. military presence in Iraq, the group poses a continuing threat to American interests. AQI also remains capable of further destabilizing an already fragile Iraq, which could in turn destabilize the Middle East.¹¹ Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a Pakistani terrorist group with longstanding ties to Islamabad's ISI, has even greater potential for inflaming regional tensions; the group was implicated in the December 2008 Mumbai attacks, which provoked further military tensions between India and Pakistan.¹² Some experts argue that a similar attack by LeT would almost certainly lead to a military exchange between the two nuclear-armed countries.¹³ In addition to its ability to destabilize South Asia, LeT has demonstrated an increasing willingness to strike non-Indian targets, such as the Jewish community center in Mumbai and the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh.¹⁴

Although al Shabaab has yet to launch a direct attack outside East Africa, its operating environment is expanding, as shown by its role in the Kampala bombing.¹⁵ The group's ability to

8. Holly Fletcher and Jayshree Bajoria, "Backgrounder: The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)," Council on Foreign Relations, July 31, 2008, http://www.cfr.org/publication/9179/east_turkestan_islamic_movement_etim.html.

9. Guido Steinberg, "A Turkish al-Qaeda: The Islamic Jihad Union and the Internationalization of Uzbek Jihadism," *Strategic Insights*, Center for Contemporary Conflict, Naval Postgraduate School, July 2008, 2, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/fachpublikationen/sbg_IJU_Strategic_Insights_ks.pdf.

10. Scott Baldauf, "Air Al Qaeda: Are Latin America's Drug Cartels Giving Al Qaeda a Lift?" *Christian Science Monitor*, January 15, 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/2010/0115/Air-Al-Qaeda-Are-Latin-America-s-drug-cartels-giving-Al-Qaeda-a-lift>.

11. Rollins, "Al Qaeda and Affiliates," 13–14.

12. C. Christine Fair, "Antecedents and Implications of the November 2008 Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) Attack upon Several Targets in the Indian Mega-City of Mumbai," testimony before the House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, March 11, 2009, http://home.comcast.net/~christine_fair/pubs/CT-320_Christine_Fair.pdf.

13. Peter Bergen and Bruce Hoffman, "Assessing the Terrorist Threat," report of the Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group, September 10, 2010, 13, <http://www.bipartisanpolicy.org/sites/default/files/NSPG%20Final%20Threat%20Assessment.pdf>.

14. Jeremy Kahn, "The Next Al Qaeda? Terror Group Lashkar-e-Taiba Is Now Focusing on Foreigners and the West," *Newsweek*, February 26, 2010, <http://www.newsweek.com/2010/02/25/the-next-al-qaeda.html>.

15. "Somali Militants 'behind' Kampala World Cup Blasts," BBC News, July 12, 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10602791>.

tap into Western communities, like the Somali diaspora in Minneapolis, presents an important challenge for counterterrorism officials: al Shabaab is better positioned than almost any other affiliate to actively cultivate homegrown extremism in the United States.¹⁶ The group's Western recruits have so far joined al Shabaab in fighting Mogadishu's Transitional Federal Government rather than focusing on Western targets, but the connections to Western communities nonetheless remain a concern for their potential to spur domestic radicalization.¹⁷

AQAP's high-profile attempted attacks on the U.S. homeland have led some American officials to describe the group as the most urgent terrorist threat facing the country.¹⁸ In addition to its clear capability and intention to strike directly at the United States, AQAP also seeks to radicalize individuals living in the West. This effort is largely driven by Samir Khan, thought to be the author of *Inspire*, the group's online English language magazine,¹⁹ and al-Awlaki, who is fast emerging as the most important AQAM spokesman for English-speaking audiences. Al-Awlaki has been linked to several recent homegrown terrorist plots in the United States, making him an important catalyst for violence beyond the Arabian Peninsula.

The group's ability and intent to confront the Yemeni regime further compounds the AQAP threat. Bordering the world's largest oil-producing state, Saudi Arabia, and confronted with resource depletion, insurgencies, and unemployment, among other challenges, Yemen is already teetering on the brink of failure.²⁰ Within this troubling context, the danger from AQAP could prove destabilizing for this strategically important region.

The rise to prominence of this third, and most dangerous, subset of al Qaeda affiliates illustrates the diffusion of power in global Islamist terrorism since 9/11. Whereas al Qaeda core previously posed the most significant threat to global security, affiliates now account for a larger share of attacks.

The Current Threat from al Qaeda-Inspired Nonaffiliated Cells and Individuals

Most of the recent plots involving al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals have failed. In many cases, like that of Faisal Shahzad, operational incompetence prevented terrorists from launching successful attacks. In the United States, law enforcement officials have relied on Muslim communities to help foil several recent plots.²¹

16. Randy James, "Al-Shabab: Recruiting Americans for Somalia's Jihad," *TIME*, December 7, 2009, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1945855,00.html>.

17. Andrea Elliott, "A Call to Jihad, Answered in America," *New York Times*, July 11, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/us/12somalis.html>.

18. Greg Miller, "CIA Sees Increased Threat in Yemen," *Washington Post*, August 25, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/24/AR2010082406763.html>.

19. "Second Edition of *Inspire* Magazine: Continues to Encourage Attacks in the West," joint intelligence bulletin, Department of Homeland Security and FBI, October 15, 2010, <http://info.publicintelligence.net/DHS-Inspire2Warning.pdf>.

20. Robert Worth, "Is Yemen the Next Afghanistan?" *New York Times*, July 6, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/11/magazine/11Yemen-t.html>.

21. According to Alejandro Buetel, in "Data on Post-9/11 Terrorism in the United States," Muslim Public Affairs Council, January 2011, 1–11, <http://www.mpac.org/assets/docs/publications/MPAC-Post-911-Terrorism-Data.pdf>, 7 out of 11 recent disrupted al Qaeda plots in the United States were foiled with the aid of the Muslim community.

This third tier of AQAM, however, could become a far more serious threat in the coming years. As previously mentioned, homegrown extremists operating within American and European borders possess certain qualities—including legal status and language and cultural skills—that may facilitate attacks. Furthermore, policymakers have fewer tools for targeting isolated self-starters, especially those with no criminal records, than for targeting established terrorist groups operating in foreign countries. Finally, measures to counter domestic extremism, like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) undercover operations used in several recent plots, run the risk of alienating the friends and family of suspected homegrown terrorists. This outcome would prove problematic, since friends and family are often the first to notice an individual's move from hateful rhetoric to violent action. These and other factors could contribute to the emergence of al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals as more forceful actors in global Islamist terrorism in the coming years.

The Dynamics of the AQAM Movement Today

Understanding how and why this movement is evolving is necessary for assessing the contemporary threat from AQAM. Recent analysis has argued that its appeal may be in decline.²² The vast majority of AQAM's victims in recent years have been Muslim.²³ The widespread killing and maiming of Muslim civilians by a movement purporting to represent their interests has led to a backlash against AQAM. Evidence of this shift is reflected in polling data from seven countries captured by the Pew Global Attitudes Survey, which showed that confidence in bin Laden dropped everywhere but Nigeria between 2003 and 2009. This drop can be seen in figure 1. Figure 2 illustrates declining public support for suicide bombing, a favored AQAM tactic, in all countries for which data were available.

Mounting criticism from influential Muslim elites has reinforced reduced public support for AQAM. In July 2005, for example, 200 of the world's most prominent Islamic scholars gathered in Jordan and unanimously issued the Amman Message, which banned the practice of *takfir*²⁴ and in so doing repudiated one of AQAM's ideological pillars.²⁵ The public recantations of former militants and clerics that once supported AQAM have further discredited the movement.²⁶

One would reasonably expect that these developments would undermine AQAM's cohesion and stymie its growth. After all, why would terrorists choose to associate themselves with an un-

22. Rollins, "Al Qaeda and Affiliates," 1–2.

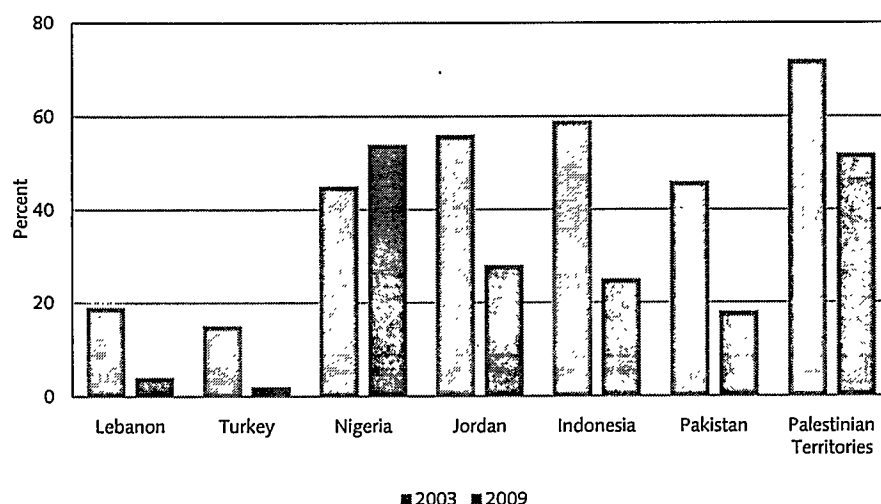
23. Among the victims of AQAM attacks that took place between 2004 and 2008, only 15 percent were from the West. If one limits this period to between 2006 and 2008, only 2 percent of AQAM's victims were of Western origin. See Scott Helfstein, Nassir Abdullah, and Muhammad al-Obaidi, "Deadly Vanguard: A Study of al-Qa'ida's Violence against Muslims," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, December 2009, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/deadly%20vanguards_complete_1.pdf.

24. *Takfir* is "the act of Muslims declaring other Muslims to be infidels" and "is an important stepping stone to engaging in violence against secular Muslim rulers and others who are perceived to be supportive of these rulers"; Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman, "Self-Inflicted Wounds: Debates and Divisions within al-Qa'ida and its Periphery," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, December 16, 2010, 19, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/Self-Inflicted%20Wounds.pdf>.

25. See <http://www.ammanmessage.com/>.

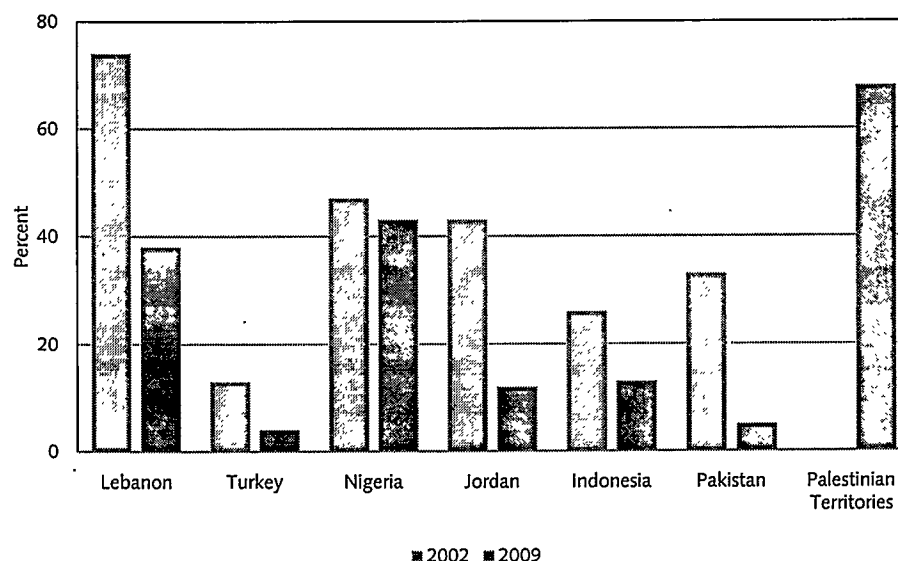
26. See Peter Bergen, "The Unraveling: The Jihadist Revolt against bin Laden," New America Foundation with Paul Cruickshank, NYU Center on Law and Security, June 11, 2008, http://www.newamerica.net/publications/articles/2008/unraveling_7221, for a good article explaining the extent of these recantations.

Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents with Confidence in Osama bin Laden in Seven Countries or Territories, 2003 and 2009.



Source: David Gordon, Transnational Threats Project, CSIS; data from "Pew Global Attitudes Project," Pew Research Center, from 2002 to 2009, <http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=20&survey=10&response=Confidence&mode=table>.

Figure 2. Percentage of Respondents in Seven Countries or Territories Indicating That Suicide Bombing Is Often or Sometimes Justified, 2002 and 2009.



Source: David Gordon, Transnational Threats Project, CSIS; data from "Pew Global Attitudes Project," Pew Research Center, from 2002 to 2009, <http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=19&survey=10&response=Often/sometimes justified&mode=table>.

Note: No 2002 data were available for the Palestinian territories.

popular movement? Unfortunately, this seems not to be the case. The number of regional networks that have associated themselves with bin Laden has steadily grown throughout the second half of the decade, as has the frequency of homegrown plots in the United States inspired by AQAM.²⁷ These are clear signs that the AQAM movement is both expanding and diversifying. What is fueling this development, particularly if reports about AQAM's declining support are indeed true?

In the past, al Qaeda core largely drove the movement's enlargement. As recounted in the first section, bin Laden provided patronage to several militant groups throughout the 1990s, bringing them into his orbit.²⁸ He and his lieutenants successfully encouraged some of these groups to attack the West, as illustrated by the description of the Bali attack in the second section. Today, however, al Qaeda core has neither the financial wherewithal nor the infrastructure to exert the same degree of influence. Instead, this process is occurring organically.

Three explanations help account for the ongoing growth of AQAM. The first is that AQAM may not actually be as unpopular as it seems. Despite anger over AQAM's violent tactics, the basic grievances that bin Laden and his allies claim to redress continue to resonate globally. Evidence can be seen in a poll conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland. As figure 3 illustrates, large percentages of the poll's respondents in Egypt, Indonesia, Morocco, and Pakistan support goals articulated by AQAM.²⁹ For a small fringe, the benefit of achieving these goals remains paramount, even if it means supporting AQAM's murderous and increasingly unpopular approach.

A more significant explanation for AQAM's expansion is the growing resonance of bin Laden's ideology in the post-9/11 world. Since 2001, the presence of U.S. forces in Muslim-majority countries, particularly Afghanistan and Iraq, has fed the perception of a U.S. occupation of Muslim lands and has been used by al Qaeda core and its affiliates to underscore their narrative of a Western war against Islam. Images on the Internet and satellite television reinforce this viewpoint. At the same time, the West has bolstered its support to several states that are forcefully confronting terrorism. Al Qaeda core has used these policies to focus attention on the West. In addition, these Western policies have aligned the interests of disparate groups, encouraging them to put their ideological and theological differences aside and cooperate in the face of a perceived occupier.

The final driving factor behind AQAM's expansion is the material benefits that groups accrue when they embrace bin Laden's ideology. GSPC's merger with al Qaeda core and transformation into AQIM is a good example. Although the leader of AQIM, Abdekmalek Droukdal, claimed the merger was driven by "religious motivations," an article in the *New York Times* based on interviews with a former AQIM lieutenant as well as American, European, and Arab officials argued that opportunism was a more likely explanation for Droukdal's decision.³⁰ The merger brought enhanced prestige for AQIM along with the associated fund-raising and recruiting benefits. In return, al

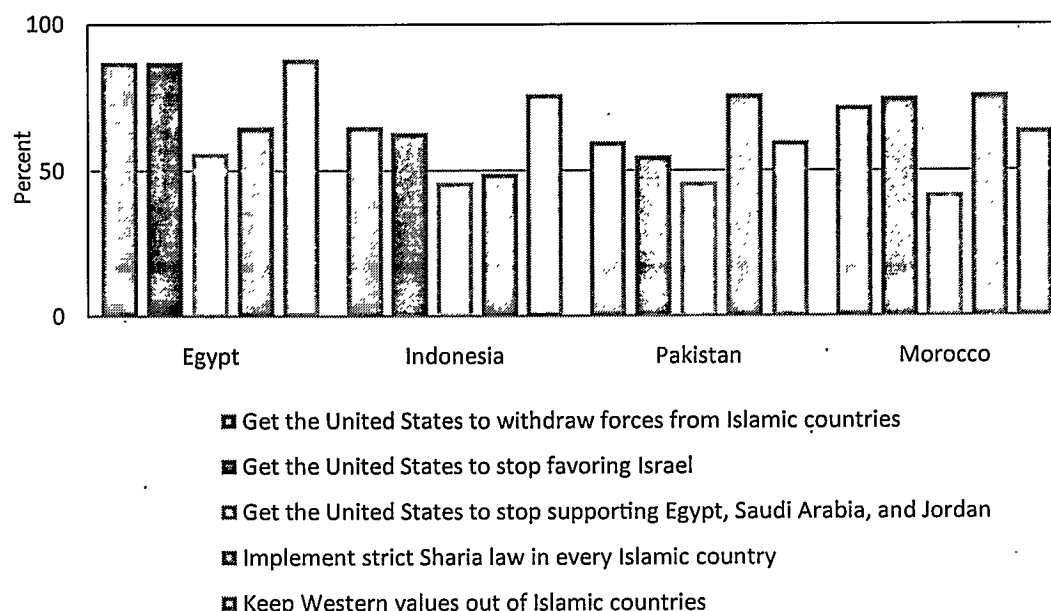
27. Brian Michael Jenkins, "No Path to Glory: Deterring Homegrown Terrorism," testimony before the House Security Committee, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing and Terrorism Risk Assessment, May 26, 2010, 1–2, http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2010/RAND_CT348.pdf.

28. Ibid.

29. "Public Opinion in the Islamic World on Terrorism, al Qaeda, and US Policies," WorldPublicOpinion.org, February 25, 2009, http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/feb09/STARTII_Feb09_rpt.pdf.

30. Souad Mekhennet, Michael Moss, Eric Schmitt, Elaine Sciolino, and Margot Williams, "A Threat Renewed: Ragtag Insurgency Gains a Lifeline from Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, July 1, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/01/world/africa/01algeria.html?pagewanted=1>.

Figure 3. Percentage of Respondents in Four Countries Who Agree with AQAM's Goals, 2006–2008.



Source: David Gordon, Transnational Threats Project, CSIS; data from "Public Opinion in the Islamic World on Terrorism, al Qaeda, and US Policies," WorldPublicOpinion.org, February 25, 2009, 20–22, http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/feb09/STARTII_Feb09_rpt.pdf.

Qaeda core was able to expand its brand of terror to North Africa, the most notable manifestation being the 2007 attack on the United Nations office in Algiers.³¹

The Internet as a Facilitator of Global Islamist Terrorism

AQAM has long relied on modern information and communication technologies to disseminate propaganda and issue operational guidance. In preparation for the 9/11 attacks, for example, hijackers used the Internet to communicate, select targets, and research flight schools.³² Since 9/11, the Internet's rapid innovation—which includes the rise of "Web 2.0," or user-generated, social media content—has enabled AQAM to develop a new set of capabilities centered on the dissemination of propaganda and recruitment.³³ The exploitation of these features of the Internet by cell leaders, spokesmen, and nonaffiliated al Qaeda supporters is part and parcel of the enduring appeal of AQAM's ideology, as described above.

31. Ibid.

32. Frank Cilluffo et al., *NETworked Radicalization: A Counter-Strategy*, special report of the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute and the University of Virginia Critical Incident Analysis Group, 2007, 11, <http://www.gwumc.edu/hspi/policy/NETworkedRadicalization.pdf>.

33. Michael Moss and Souad Mekhennet, "An Internet Jihad Aims at U.S. Viewers," *New York Times*, October 15, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/15/us/15net.html>.

The Internet has allowed AQAM to reach a flatter audience that transcends age, gender, background, and geographic boundaries. By exploiting the Internet's advantage in disseminating new forms of media, for example, AQAM has been able to target so-called digital natives, or younger, tech-savvy recruits who are at home in virtual realms.³⁴ AQAM has used increasingly creative media, including video games, rap videos, and comic books, to project an image of "jihadi cool" and to lure "young people nursing resentments and looking for thrills."³⁵

In addition to these so-called digital natives, the Internet helps AQAM reach those "who might not be theologically devout or even have a sound religious foundation, but [who] are using this new jihadi cool to justify criminal acts of terrorism."³⁶ According to surveys conducted to assess militants' motivation for joining the movement, "The top three answers were motorcycles, guns and access to women. You had to go pretty far down the list to get to religious motivation."³⁷

Evidence from several recent cases of homegrown extremism in the United States points to the centrality of the Internet in the growth of al Qaeda-inspired nonaffiliated cells and individuals. Hasan sought guidance from al-Awlaki via email in the lead up to the Fort Hood shootings. Al-Awlaki's influence on Hasan remains unclear, but in any event, the Internet enabled contact between two men who might not otherwise have communicated.³⁸

Other, more recent online innovations also seem to have facilitated the rise of nonaffiliated cells and individuals. Ahmed Abdullah Minni, one of the five young men from Northern Virginia arrested on charges of trying to join the Taliban, often viewed YouTube videos depicting insurgent attacks on coalition forces in Afghanistan. His praise for those attacks, posted on the Web site's user-generated comments section, attracted the attention of a Taliban recruiter known as "Saifullah." The two began exchanging emails and conspired to have Minni and his friends travel to Pakistan, where the group was eventually arrested.³⁹

That incident demonstrates just how potent and multifaceted a force the Internet has become in fostering radicalization, enabling the recruitment of would-be terrorists, and coordinating logistical details, like how to travel to a terrorist training camp. For "wannabe" terrorists living in the United States and other Western countries, online content like an al-Awlaki lecture must very often supplant the counsel of a living, breathing cleric. Once an al-Awlaki lecture, or a YouTube video of terrorist violence, helps spark radicalization, e-mail, Facebook, and other forms of online communication can forge links between terrorist operatives and recruits thousands of miles apart. With radicalization, recruitment, and planning now possible in a virtual realm, Islamist extremists no longer must meet in person to enact their agenda.

34. Akil N. Awan, "The Virtual Jihad: An Increasingly Legitimate Form of Warfare," *CTC Sentinel* 3, no. 5 (May 2010).

35. Dina Temple-Raston, "Jihadi Cool: Terrorist Recruiters' Latest Weapon," *NPR's Morning Edition*, March 26, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125186382>.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. David Johnston and Scott Shane, "U.S. Knew of Suspect's Tie to Radical Cleric," *New York Times*, November 9, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/10/us/10inquire.html>.

39. Scott Shane, "Web Posts Began Tale of Detained Americans," *New York Times*, December 13, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/14/world/asia/14pstan.html>.

This assessment has argued that the threats emanating from AQAM's constituent parts are highly varied, in both severity and impact. As a movement, AQAM is expanding and diversifying despite signs of eroding legitimacy among former supporters, influential religious figures, and the Muslim public writ large. The ongoing resonance of AQAM's core grievances, the negative impact of certain aspects of Western policies and counterterrorism activities, and the benefits of association with al Qaeda core drive these trends. The Internet has further expanded AQAM's scope by exposing its propaganda to individuals living in the West, by creating a virtual global community of like-minded extremists, and by facilitating plots and violent action by nonaffiliated cells and individuals.

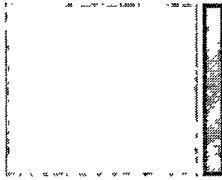


CONCLUSION

As the foregoing analysis has shown, the threat from al Qaeda has evolved significantly over time. What began as a small group of Arab militants in Peshawar, Pakistan, in the late 1980s has since morphed into a terrorist “Hydra”¹ with global reach and, within some quarters, widening appeal. This transition has fundamental implications for the manner in which governments conduct counterterrorism today.

How and why the movement might continue to change—and whether it will even endure—are crucial questions that will shape the future of counterterrorism policy. These questions are at the heart of the CSIS AQAM Futures Project and will be the focus of subsequent reports. By conducting unrestricted, long-range analysis of AQAM, this effort will help policymakers and strategists preempt and prepare for the full spectrum of possible al Qaeda threats in the year 2025.

1. Juan Zarate, former deputy national security adviser for combating terrorism and current senior adviser at CSIS, has used the term *Hydra* to refer to the current AQAM threat.



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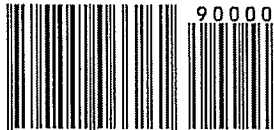
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 02/17/2011

To: Charlotte

[redacted] b6
TFO [redacted] b7C
SA [redacted] b7E
SA
SA
SA
IA
IA

Charlotte [redacted]
SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
IA [redacted]
SOS [redacted]

Counterterrorism

[redacted]
UC [redacted]
[redacted]
SSA [redacted]
IA [redacted]

From: Charlotte

[redacted]
Contact: SOS [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)
(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)
~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)

Title: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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FILE b6
b7C [redacted]

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 02/17/2011

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b7E

[redacted] (S)

KHAN, SAMIR, ZAFAR
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis:

(S)

[redacted] (S)

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Derived From : ~~Multiple~~ Sources
Declassify On: ~~20360216~~

Administrative: (S)

[redacted]

[redacted]

(S)

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Enclosure(s): (S)

[redacted]

[redacted]

(S)

Details:

(S)

[redacted]

[redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 02/17/2011

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X

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 02/17/2011

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X

X

(S)

X

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 02/17/2011

X

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 02/17/2011

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Action)

CHARLOTTE

AT [redacted]

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(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 02/17/2011

♦♦ (U) Read and clear.

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~ (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 11/26/2010

To:

Attn:

SSA

Attn:

SA

From:

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: ~~(S)~~

Title: ~~(S)~~

Synopsis: ~~(S/INF)~~

Derived from : ~~FBI NSISCG-20090615~~

~~Declassify On: 20351102~~

Reference (s) :

Details: ~~(X)~~

~~SECRET~~ // ~~NOFORN~~ (S)

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b7E

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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(U)

To:

Re:

(S)

From:

11/02/2010

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT

(U)

(S)

Read and Clear

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Info)

AT

(U)

(S)

: Read and Clear

Set Lead 3: (Info)

AT

(U)

(S)

Read and Clear

b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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b7E

[redacted] (CE) (FBI)

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011 5:15 AM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: question for [redacted]

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NON-RECORD

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[redacted]
We confirmed through [redacted] that [redacted] is still in [redacted] on restricted travel. He has no passport and is not allowed to travel. He is up for review this year and he will again be placed on restricted travel for an additional two years. He has not become radicalized again, but [redacted]

Hope this helps,

[redacted]
From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, February 12, 2011 4:54 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: FW: question for [redacted]

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b7C
b7E

[redacted] if you can assist, that would be much appreciated!

Best,

[redacted]
From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 3:45 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: question for [redacted]

[redacted] I hope this email finds you both well. I know [redacted] is on his way out and [redacted] is on his way in - just not sure who is where right now.

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I'm writing to request if it is possible to get an update/status on the whereabouts of [redacted] Specifically, is he still in [redacted]

Attached is the latest EC from 2/2010 from [redacted] on [redacted] status:

<< File [redacted] WPD >>

For [redacted] benefit, here's a document that can provide some background on [redacted] and CE's interest in [redacted]

<< File [redacted] WPD >>

The reason for the informal inquiry is we are pushing out an intel product and simply need to know if [redacted] is still currently in [redacted]. CE's [redacted] will fully coordinate the final product with [redacted] prior to publication.

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Best,

SA [REDACTED]

FBI Charlott [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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b7E

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UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 12/20/2010

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b7E

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Squad [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

(S) Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED]

(U)
(U)b1
b3
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b7C
b7E

(U) Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

(S)

(U) STATS

(S)

Synopsis: (S) To document stats to date in captioned case.

(U)

(S)

Derived From: G-1

Declassify On: 12/20/2035

(U)

(U) Details: (S) This report documents all statistics earned from 10/05/2010 to present. The majority of these stats were a team effort and thus, all team members will receive credit for the majority of the below-listed stats. Due to high workload, substantial details of the below statistics are not included in this EC. See case file or [REDACTED]

for further details.

b3
b7E~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 12/20/2010

(U)

~~(S)~~

- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]
- to [redacted]

b1
b3
b7E

(U)

~~(S)~~

-

[redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E

(U)

~~(S)~~

Case information was released to DoD on a regular basis.

[redacted] (S)

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b7D

(U) Writer organized and attended (with Samir Khan investigative team) radicalization training, presented by Dr. [redacted] and his team from Virginia Tech and CRA, on 10/7/10.

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[redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) 12/20/2010

Accomplishment Information:

Number: 50

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad

Number: 50

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad

Number: 12

Type:

ITU:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad

Number: 10

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad

Number: 1

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad

Number: 1

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad

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(S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) 12/20/2010

Number: 1

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad:

b6
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b7E

Number: 1

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad:

Number: 50

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad:

Number: 50

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad:

Number: 12

Type:

ITU:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad:

Number: 1

Type:

ITU:

Claimed By:

SSN:

Name:

Squad:

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 12/20/2010

Number: 50

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

Number: 50

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

Number: 12

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

b6
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b7E

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

Number: 1

Type: INTERVIEW OF SUBJECT (CONTACT & ESPIONAGE)

ITU: AGENT INTERVIEW

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

Number: 50

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 12/20/2010

Number: 50

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By: [redacted]

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

Number: 12

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By: [redacted]

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By: [redacted]

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

Number: 1

Type: INTERVIEW OF SUBJECT (CONTACT & ESPIONAGE)

ITU: AGENT INTERVIEW

Claimed By: [redacted]

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad [redacted]

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-10-2019 BY [REDACTED] NSICG

Charlotte FBI [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

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b7C

Cc: [REDACTED]

Sent: Saturday, February 12, 2011 10:40 AM

Subject: Fw: [REDACTED]

Fyi

----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat Feb 12 10:44:44 2011

Subject: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] indicates the house in Charlotte may be going on the market soon. Not sure if [REDACTED] plans on moving to DC early or just downsizing and staying in the area. See below

----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri Feb 11 18:32:56 2011

Subject: Khar [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] may be putting their home on the market soon. A Female (believed to be a Tate Real Estate Agent) was observed taking photos of the house and the property from all angles. The Female departed in a 99 honda accord.

[REDACTED] R/O [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Road, Charlotte. The Female also looked at one other home in the khan neighborhood that had a Tate Real Estate for Sale sign on its property.

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2/15/2011 [REDACTED]



Accessing American Muslim Extremists: An Overview of Online Trends in 2010

A significant number of American Muslim extremists involved in terror-related activity over the past several years have been influenced by an abundance of terrorist propaganda and recruitment techniques online.

A closer look at the arrests of domestic extremists motivated by radical interpretations of Islam in 2010 reveals the continuing significance of these evolving online efforts in the radicalization process. In addition to utilizing a wide range of online platforms to access and share terrorist propaganda, including Web sites, forums, blogs, social networking sites and video hosting sites, domestic Muslim extremists are increasingly being targeted by English-language terrorist materials with colloquial Western references designed specifically for them.

The media wing of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al Qaeda's affiliate in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, has deliberately designed a portion of its propaganda and recruitment efforts to appeal to and engage sympathizers in the U.S. Since July 2010, AQAP has released via the Internet four issues of its English-language magazine *Inspire*, which is filled with accessible Western references and practical advice.

The magazine's use of colorful graphics, media excerpts and its overall modern style makes it more appealing to Americans when they are reading about bomb making instructions and tips on how to destroy buildings and inflict mass casualties. The content of *Inspire* is clearly also geared toward American audiences, featuring numerous calls for attacks on American soil, including those "that involve less players and less time to launch" in order to "circumvent the security barriers America worked so hard to erect." The magazine also instructs readers to "fight jihad on U.S. soil instead of traveling overseas to join the mujahidin in an overt matter."

The Winter 2010 issue goes so far as to encourage participation in the production of the magazine, asking readers to contribute articles, quotes and images. Actively participating in the creation of propaganda materials can further radicalize an individual, who may view himself as part of a larger terrorist movement as a result. For example, Mohamed Osman Mohamud, who was arrested in November 2010 for attempting to blow up a Christmas Tree lighting with a car bomb in Portland, told an undercover FBI operative that he wrote and submitted an article to *Inspire*, as well as to a similar online magazine called *Jihad Recollections*. An article Mohamud wrote for the third issue of *Jihad Recollections* in August 2009 ascribes the success of Al Sahab, Al Qaeda's media wing, to the widespread attention its materials get from both Muslim followers and the mainstream media.

The style and emphasis of *Inspire* is likely the result of Samir Khan, the apparent principal author of the magazine, and Anwar al-Awlaki, a regular contributor. Prior to traveling to Yemen and aligning himself with AQAP, Khan lived in North Carolina and was known for distributing terrorist propaganda material to American audiences through a series of blogs. Al-Awlaki, who is on the U.S. Treasury Department's list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists, has catered to English speaking audiences for several years. He has encouraged American Muslims to attack non-Muslims and Western interests through his literature, sermons and other materials.

One indication of al-Awlaki's widespread influence online is the number of American Muslim extremists that have been arrested who were found in possession of his materials. The list includes many of those arrested in 2010, among them Antonio Martinez, a Maryland man arrested for attempting to detonate what he believed to be a car bomb at a Maryland Army recruiting center in December; Ahmed Farooque, a Virginia man who was arrested in October for allegedly plotting attacks against Metro stations in the Washington Metropolitan Area; Shaker Masri, a Chicago man arrested for attempting to travel to Somalia and train with Al Shabaab in August; and Paul Rockwood Jr., an Alaska man who pleaded guilty in July to planning revenge attacks against those he

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"desecrated Islam."

Many others arrested prior to 2010 have been influenced by al-Awlaki as well, most notably Nidal Malik Hasan, who allegedly killed 13 people at the Fort Hood Army base after exchanging emails with al-Awlaki.

Al-Awlaki and Samir Khan are among a growing chorus of Americans located abroad who use their online pulpits to reach and influence audiences in the U.S. by repackaging ideologies of extreme intolerance and violence into digestible sound bites. Another is twenty-five-year-old Omar Hammami, a Muslim convert from Alabama, who was charged with providing material support to terrorists in an indictment unsealed in August 2010.

Hammami has appeared in a number of online videos since 2007, recruiting young Americans "to come and live the life of a mujahed [Muslim warrior]" in Somalia and join Al Shabaab. Since Hammami first appeared in these Al Shabaab videos, at least 30 Americans have joined, or attempted to join, Al Shabaab. Among them are Mohamed Mahmood Alessa and Carlos Eduardo Almonte, who were charged in June 2010 for attempting to travel to Somalia and train with Al Shabaab. Prior to their arrest, Alessa and Almonte extensively used the Internet to view various documents and recordings that promoted "violent jihad," according to the affidavit filed in their case. They also allegedly watched videos of Al Shabaab fighters in Somalia and other videos depicting attacks on uniformed personnel in Iraq.

In some cases, American Muslim extremists have been able to communicate directly with terrorists or propagandists abroad. For example, Texas resident Barry Walter Bujol, Jr. communicated online with al-Awlaki before he attempted to deliver money and other equipment to AQAP. During their e-mail communications, Bujol received a document from al-Awlaki outlining ways that he could support the international terrorist movement, which included giving money to the "mujahideen [Muslim warriors]."

The types of materials distributed by al-Awlaki and others, and the manner in which they are disseminated, have served as a blueprint for other Americans seeking to emulate their methods. For example, Abdel Hameed Shehadeh, who was arrested in Hawaii after he allegedly made false statements about his efforts to join the Taliban and fight against American troops, created several Web sites that "advocated violent jihad against the West," according to court documents. He also admitted that one of his Web sites was designed to "mirror and reformat" the teachings of al-Awlaki.

Similarly, Zachary Chesser, a Virginia man who was arrested in July 2010 for attempting to join Al Shabaab in Somalia, sought to mimic much of the terrorist materials on the Internet that he saw targeting Americans. Chesser not only distributed terrorist propaganda through a variety of Web sites, blogs and social networking sites, but he also created and distributed original materials, including a 25-page document that detailed ways to teach Western children the "values of Jihad." Chesser argued in several of his pieces that the only way to ensure the longevity of a global terrorist movement is by using the Internet. "The jihad movement has moved from the mountains and caves to the bedrooms of every major city around the world," he wrote.

While the influence of Chesser's extensive online messages and materials remains unclear, his April 2010 posts threatening the creators of South Park received significant attention on various extremist forums, as well as catching the eye of mainstream media and law enforcement.

Law enforcement officials were able to detect and foil a number of plots in 2010, in part because of online activity. For example, federal authorities arrested Antonio Martinez, a Baltimore man, for attempting to detonate what he believed to be a car bomb at an army recruiting center in Catonsville, Maryland. The FBI reportedly first learned of Martinez's radical ideology from his posts on his Facebook profile, which he created around the same time that he converted to Islam. "When are these crusaders gonna realize they cant win? How many more lives are they willing to sacrafice. ALLAHUAKBAR [sic]," he wrote as the first post to his Facebook profile in August 2010. Communicating with an undercover informant on Facebook, Martinez expressed his desire to go to Pakistan or Afghanistan and said it was his "dream to be among the ranks of the mujahideen and that he hoped Allah would open a door for him because all he thinks about is jihad," according to the affidavit.

The following day, Awais Younis was arrested for allegedly issuing threats on Facebook to detonate explosives in high-traffic areas of Washington, DC. The FBI initiated an investigation into Younis' online activity in late November 2010, after the Facebook user with whom he had been communicating shared information about their correspondence.

The impact of the Internet on an individual's radicalization process varies; not everyone exposed to terrorist propaganda will necessarily be susceptible to it, and even fewer will actually engage in terror-related criminal activity. However, it is clear that terrorist groups will continue to try to influence sympathizers in the U.S. by adopting new technologies and styles to distribute their materials.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-04-2019 BY [REDACTED] NSICG

Charlotte FBI [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2011 1:02 PM
Attach: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]

----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tue Feb 22 13:01:26 2011
Subject: [REDACTED]

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Have you seen the [REDACTED] "FursaniMedia"? Whoever made this channel is using Samir Khan's logo for al-Fursan Media and calling it 'Fursani Media'. Thought it was interesting [I attached a screenshot].

Respectfully,

FursaniMedia

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This email and the contents thereof may be subject to public record requests per [REDACTED] Statutes

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2/22/2011

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-09-2019
ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 01/28/2011

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

(S) Drafted By: [REDACTED] :lm

Case ID #: (X) (U) [REDACTED]

Title: (X) [REDACTED] (S)

Synopsis: (U) To document interview of [REDACTED]

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301

Declassify On: 20360128

(U) Details: (X) On January 22, 2011 [REDACTED] date of birth [REDACTED] social security account number [REDACTED] residence address [REDACTED] telephone number [REDACTED] was interviewed by FBI [REDACTED] at Panera Bread restaurant, 108 W North Avenue, Elmhurst, Illinois. Also present was [REDACTED] date of birth [REDACTED] a police officer with the [REDACTED] police department and a current Special Agent applicant with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was present in order to facilitate an introduction between [REDACTED] and the interviewing agent. [REDACTED] provided the following information:

(U//~~FOUO~~) Tanzeem-e-Islam is a religious organization in Pakistan with the stated goal of creating a world-wide Islamic Caliphate through non-violent means. The Tanzeem-e-Islam belief system incorporates a school of thought that emphasizes the sole

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(S) To: [redacted] From: [redacted]
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/28/2011

use of the Koran to provide religious guidance for everyday life. Tanzeem-e-Islam was [redacted] and was eventually brought to the United States. The U.S. based Tanzeem-e-Islami North America (TINA) was [redacted] eventually [redacted] TINA [redacted] Islamic Organization of North America (IONA), which is simply an English translation of Tanzeem-e-Islami North America. At the peak of IONA, in probably 2005 or 2006, there were approximately 300 members across the United States. Currently, IONA still exists in the United States, but has significantly fewer members and is more of a shell than a functioning, vibrant organization.

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SAMIR KHAN's [redacted] was an IONA [redacted] along with the Chicago-based [redacted] and, together, [redacted] IONA [redacted] IONA. Currently, the Chicago chapter of IONA is [redacted]

(U//~~FOUO~~) [redacted] was fully committed to IONA's mission of non-violence, but would never speak out against those Muslims who engage in terrorist acts, or felt that Islam called Muslims to violent action. [redacted] appeared to identify with the grievances and arguments presented by terrorists. [redacted] appeared to try to "walk an ideological tightrope" by not arguing in support of terrorism, but failing to denounce terrorism.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) IONA does align its beliefs with a specific Islamic school of thought or methodology, such as Salafism. IONA members can come from any Islamic tradition, other than Shi'a Islam, and IONA counts both Salafists and Sufis among its members. IONA once had office space in Chicago, but now all IONA operations are run out of IONA's headquarters in Michigan.

(U//~~FOUO~~) The Chicago chapter of IONA [redacted] part of the IONA [redacted] SAMIR KHAN [redacted] of IONA and the chapter initially consisted mostly of "older" men, referred to by the younger members as the "uncles," including [redacted] was probably a friend of [redacted] and was brought to Chicago [redacted] to IONA. [redacted] in IONA among high school and college age Muslims and the Chicago chapter increased membership significantly. [redacted] is still in the Chicago area, but is no longer affiliated with IONA. [redacted] Al Furqaan Institute, a

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(S) To: [redacted] From: [redacted]
Re: (U) [redacted] 01/28/2011

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group that actively distributes copies of the Koran to the public. [redacted] eventually left IONA after there was a controversy regarding [redacted] credentials [redacted] noted that [redacted] has seen [redacted]

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(U//~~FOUO~~) SAMIR KHAN first came to Chicago because of SAMIR KHAN's membership in IONA and SAMIR KHAN [redacted] and [redacted] SAMIR KHAN [redacted] when SAMIR KHAN flew to Chicago because [redacted]

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[redacted] It was common for [redacted] IONA and [redacted]

(U//~~FOUO~~) [redacted] is unsure how many times SAMIR KHAN visited Chicago, but knows SAMIR KHAN visited on at least three or four occasions in 2005 or 2006. SAMIR KHAN traveled to Chicago for a Chicago chapter "camp out" that was held at IONA's office space in Villa Park, Illinois. SAMIR KHAN may have visited for another "camp out," but [redacted] was unsure.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) SAMIR KHAN visited Chicago in order [redacted] SAMIR KHAN likely met over the internet or through SAMIR KHAN's blog. SAMIR KHAN did not inform SAMIR KHAN [redacted]

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[redacted] opined that many religious people get married when they are young in order to avoid the inevitable temptation of premarital sex that would occur as one ages [redacted]

[redacted] further opined that likely SAMIR KHAN [redacted]

[redacted] SAMIR KHAN was a "horny" guy. [redacted] heard that SAMIR KHAN [redacted] were [redacted]

[redacted] never met SAMIR KHAN [redacted] but believed [redacted] may have been [redacted]

(U//~~FOUO~~) SAMIR KHAN visited Chicago a final time and attended an IONA Higher Studies Program (HSP) meeting [redacted]

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[redacted] The Higher Studies Program was a group of IONA members that studied Islam in a very academic way and [redacted] was a [redacted]

[redacted] in Islamic studies at area universities despite not obtaining [redacted]

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(S) To: [redacted] From: [redacted]
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/28/2011

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[redacted]
[redacted] only in the HSP for a short time, because both [redacted]
[redacted]

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(U//~~FOUO~~) After the meeting that was attended by SAMIR KHAN, [redacted]
SAMIR KHAN, [redacted]
[redacted] and SAMIR KHAN presented an elaborate and passionate argument that IONA's non-violent stance was wrong. SAMIR KHAN also presented a long thesis SAMIR KHAN had compiled to back up SAMIR KHAN's belief in the need for jihad that largely consisted of quotes and the writings of perceived scholars. [redacted]
[redacted] SAMIR KHAN that violent jihad in the current state of the world would be counterproductive. SAMIR KHAN appeared particularly angry and it was this meeting that prompted SAMIR KHAN to leave IONA permanently.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) SAMIR KHAN's [redacted] in Chicago was [redacted]
[redacted] and SAMIR KHAN [redacted]
whenever SAMIR KHAN was in Chicago [redacted] SAMIR KHAN's [redacted]
[redacted] SAMIR KHAN.

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[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] has returned to the Chicago area, is single, and has a group of friends that are unknown to [redacted] friends, along with [redacted] as a hobby.

(U//~~FOUO~~) [redacted] was also a friend of SAMIR KHAN, although [redacted] did not necessarily believe in SAMIR KHAN's vision. [redacted] recalled that [redacted] would often [redacted] SAMIR KHAN's rhetoric regarding the need to "spill blood" or engage in jihad.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) [redacted] opined that [redacted] would not likely be cooperative with law enforcement, as [redacted] had made statements in the past that indicated a element of distrust.

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(U) (X) When asked if there were others in the Chicago area that may have a similar world view as SAMIR KHAN, [redacted] opined that [redacted]
to SAMIR KHAN's blog in that [redacted]

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(S) To: [redacted] From: [redacted]
Re: (X) [redacted] 01/28/2011

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[redacted] was not an IONA member. (S)

(U//~~FOUO~~) Hezb-ut-Tahrir individuals in the Chicago area, including [redacted]

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[redacted] Hezb-ut-Tahrir members often stand outside of area mosques and hand out copies of "The Shield," a publication that explains the mission and goals of Hezb-ut-Tahrir. It is not uncommon for leaders of the mosques to ask the Hezb-ut-Tahrir members to leave and to stop handing out the pamphlets.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) [redacted] is open to recontact by FBI- [redacted] but expressed a desire to stay "out of trouble." as [redacted] intended to [redacted] at some point in the future and [redacted] did not want any problems. [redacted] originally from the [redacted]

(U//~~FOUO~~) Throughout the interview, [redacted] appeared cooperative and forthcoming with information.

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[redacted] (CE) (FBI)

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From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 2:04 PM
To: [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: RE: [redacted]

[redacted] - I spoke to [redacted]. They are good-to-go, as is Charlotte.
Please let [redacted] (not cc'ed on this email so as not to think this is the
thumbs-up) know when you are good-to-go.
Thanks-
[redacted]

-----Original Message-----

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 1:19 PM
To: [redacted]

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Cc: [redacted]

Subject: [redacted]
Importance: High

All -

In coordination with CTD [redacted] and [redacted]

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FBI Charlotte compiled [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] - as discussed, will you please [redacted]
[redacted] There is a 1700
deadline today.
[redacted]

Thanks to all of you for working on this.

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Team Khan

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[redacted]
(CE) (FBI)

From:
Sent:
To:

[redacted]
Thursday, February 24, 2011 2:44 PM

Subject:

ALCON,

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Thanks,

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

(S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 02/01/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: SSA
SOS



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SA

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From: Charlotte

Contact: SOS

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U)

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Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

~~(S)~~

~~(U)~~



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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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(U) ~~(S)~~ ANWAR NASSER AULAQI
CT - SUNNI EXTREMISM - MIDDLE EAST

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~~(S)~~ [redacted] (S)

Synopsis: (U) Summary and analysis of *Inspire* November 1431/2010, Special Issue, an online magazine produced by al-Qaeda Organization in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), as it relates to *Inspire* Summer 1431/2010 (Issue 1), *Inspire* Fall 1431/2010 (Issue 2), Samir Khan and *Jihad Recollections*.

~~Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360201~~

Reference: (U)

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Administrative: ~~(S)~~

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Enclosure(s): ~~(S)~~

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Details: ~~(S)~~

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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(S) Samir Khan [subject of [redacted]]

(S) [redacted] In late 2006, Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from [redacted] in Charlotte, NC. On his online blog, as well as on several other online forums and Web sites with similar content, Khan expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [redacted]

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[redacted] Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as *Jihad Recollections*, which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra. (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

NAME _____

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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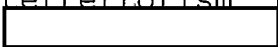
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U)  02/01/2011

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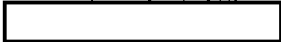
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U)  02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) 02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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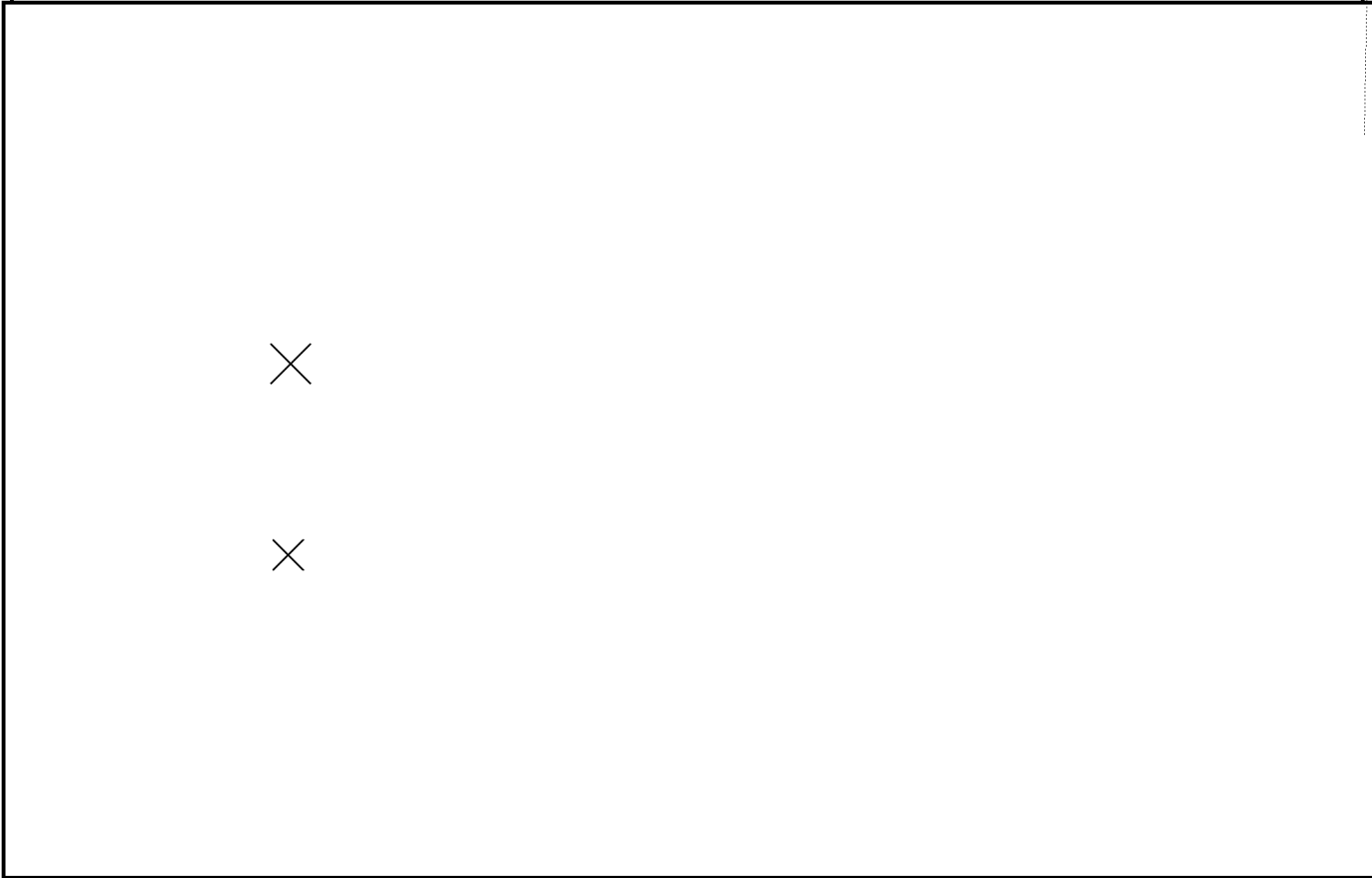
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U)  02/01/2011



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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/01/2011

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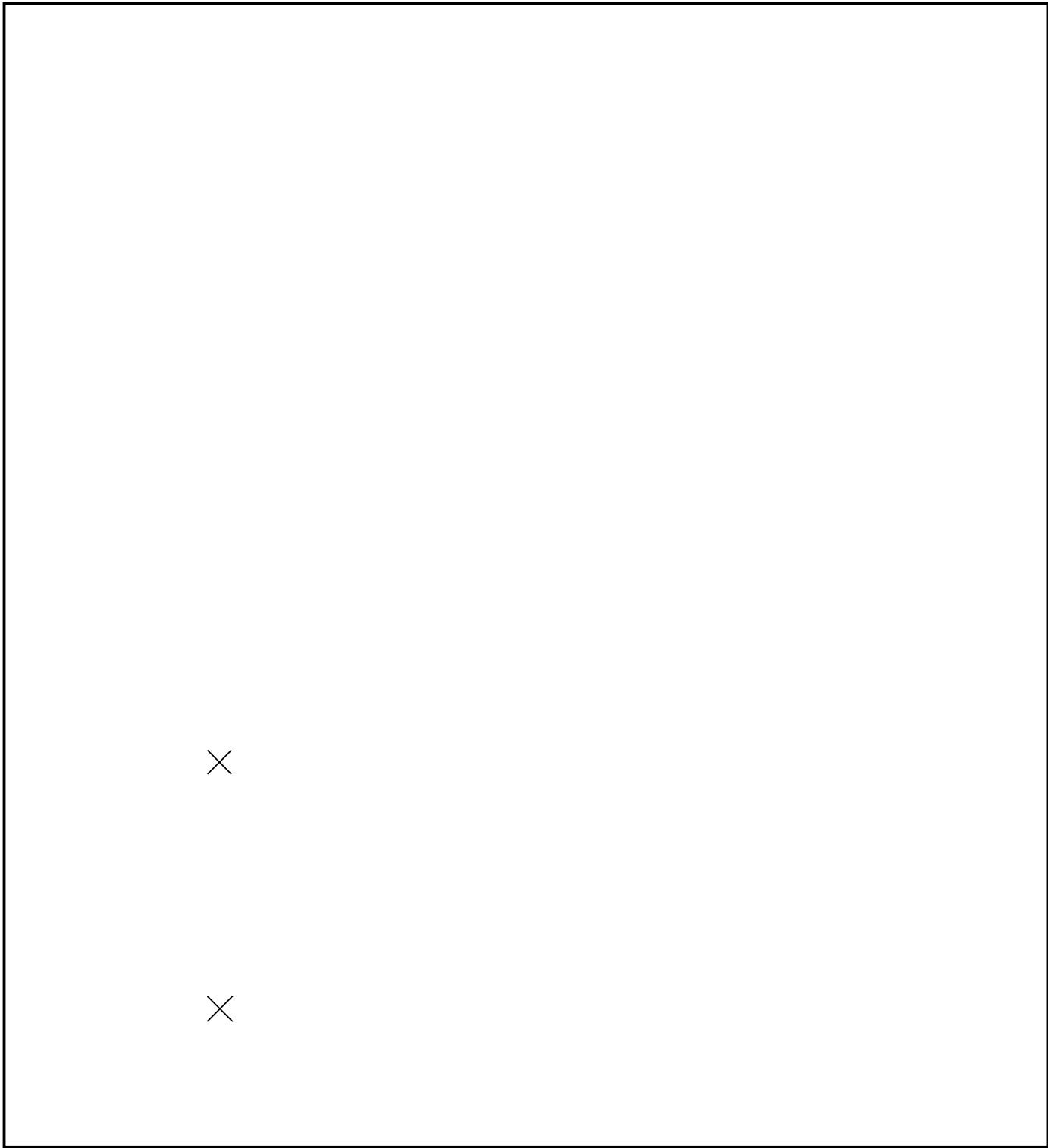
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U)  02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

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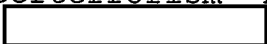
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U)  02/01/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/01/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted] For information only.

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Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 5: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

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~~SECRET~~//~~ORCON~~/~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 02/11/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
SOS [redacted]

SSA M [redacted]
IA [redacted]

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Charlotte

SSA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
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IA [redacted]

SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
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From: Charlotte

[redacted]
Contact: SOS [redacted]

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Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #:

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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Title: (S)

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SAMIR KHAN

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[redacted] (S)

Synopsis: (S//NF)

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[redacted] (S)

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Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360211

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Administrative: (S)

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[redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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Enclosure: ~~(S//FOUO)~~

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Details: ~~(S//FOUO)~~

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

[Large redacted area]

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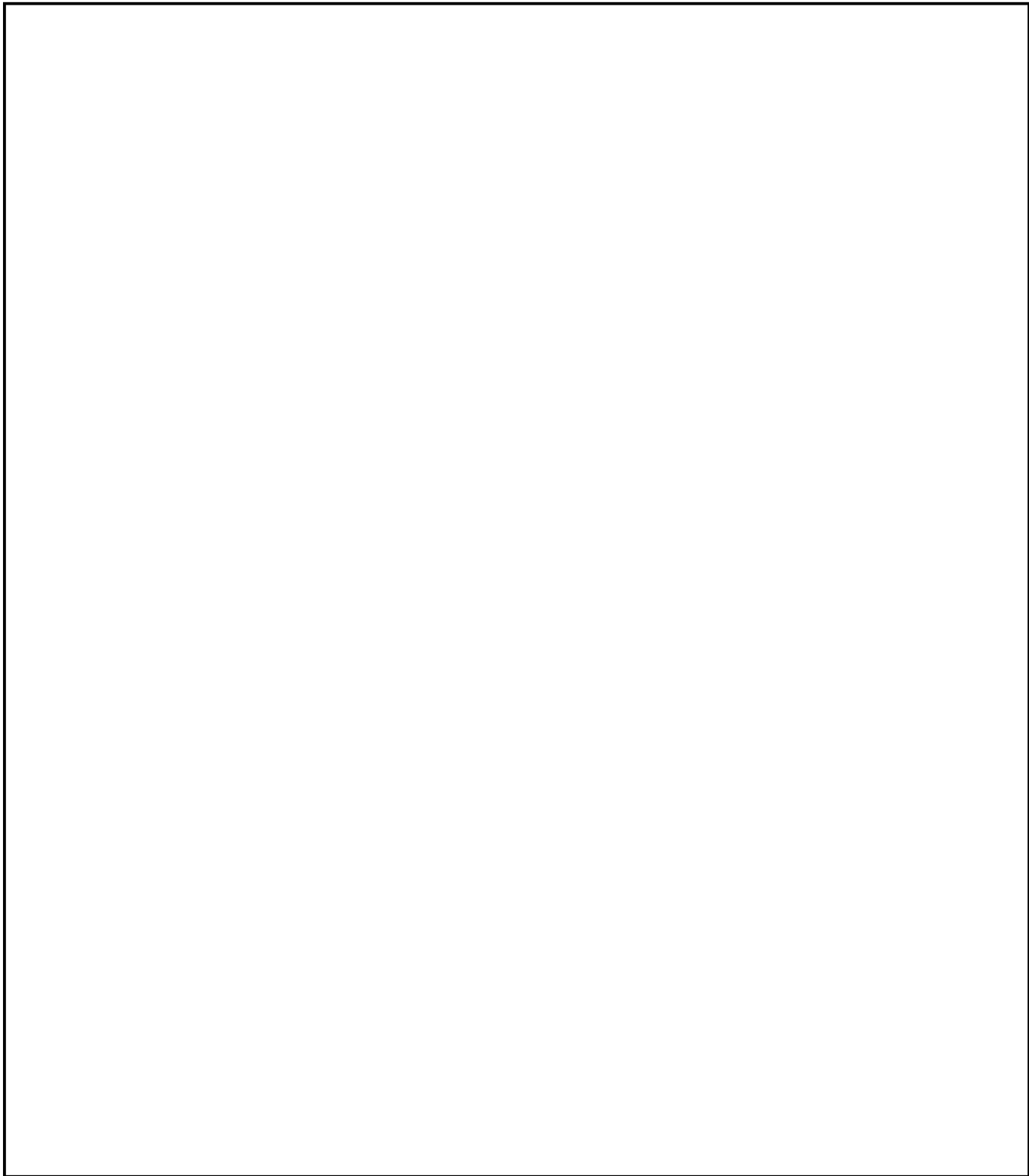
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011



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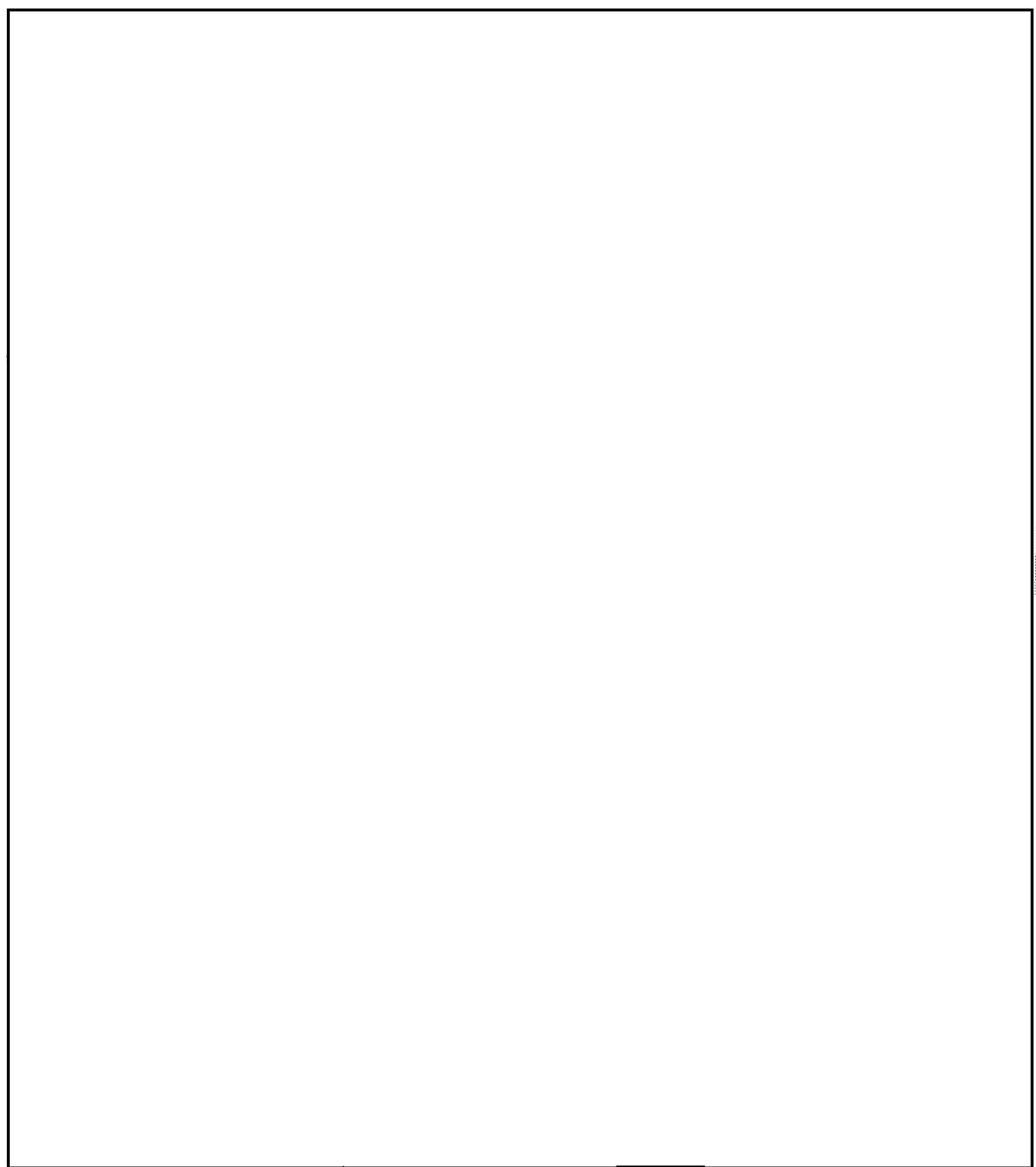
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011



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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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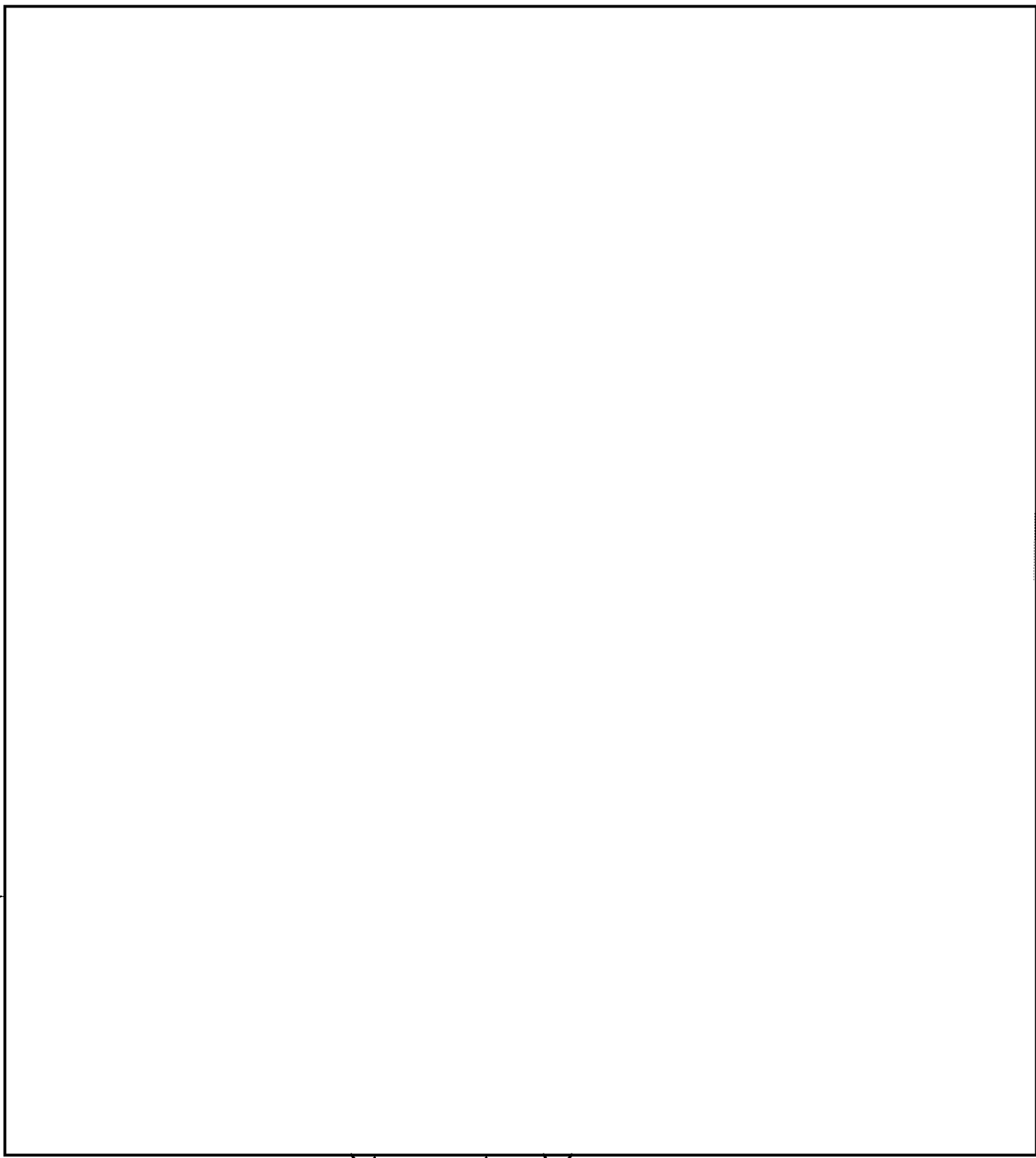
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011



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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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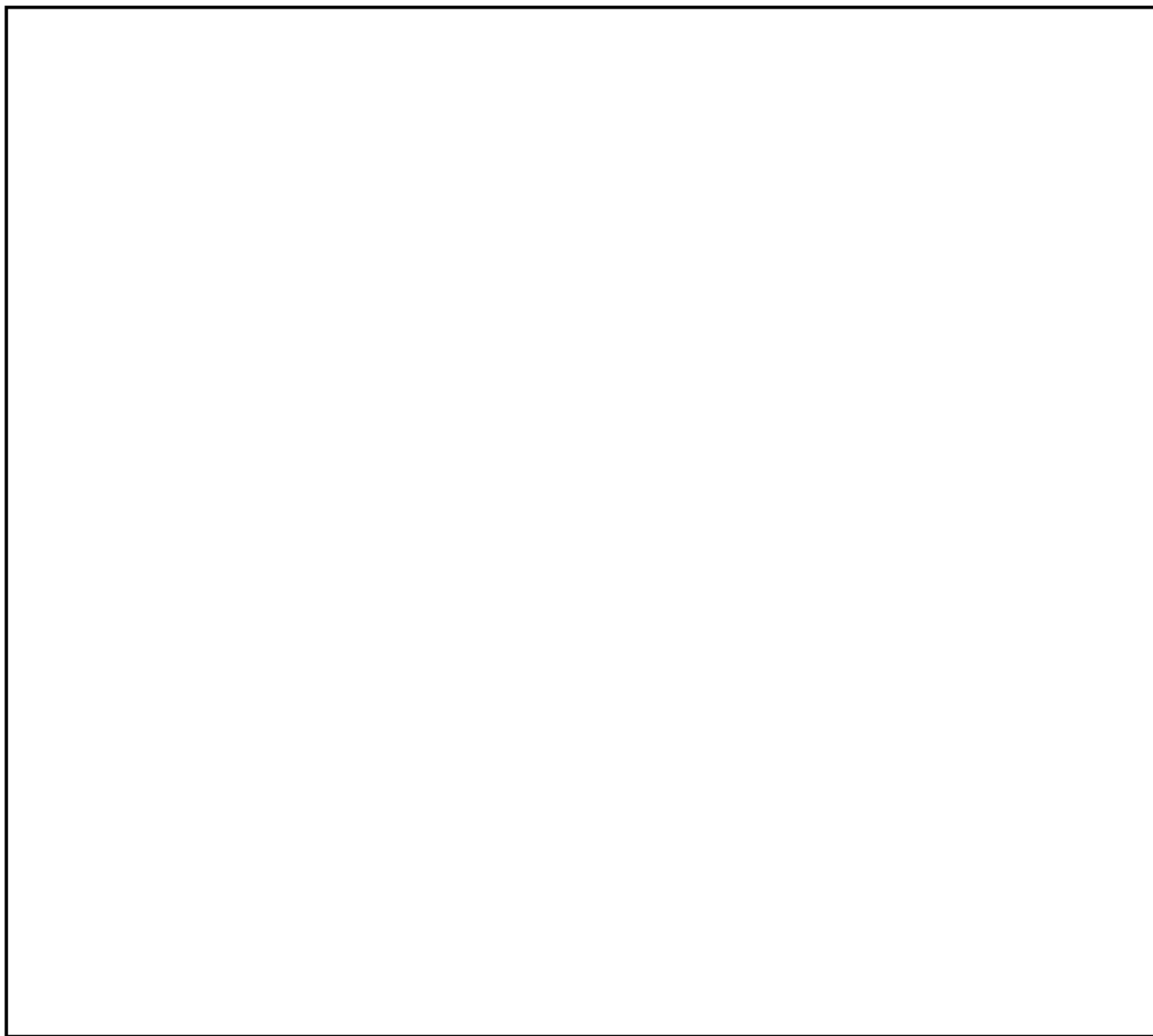
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011



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UPDATE ON CONNECTION TO SAMIR KHAN [redacted]

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BACKGROUND ON SAMIR KHAN

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(S//NF) [redacted] In late 2006, Samir Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from [redacted] in Charlotte, NC. On his online blog, as well as on several other online forums and web sites with similar content, Khan

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [redacted]

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[redacted] (S) Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections," which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in 10/2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [Redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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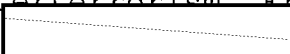
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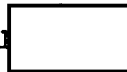
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X)  02/11/2011

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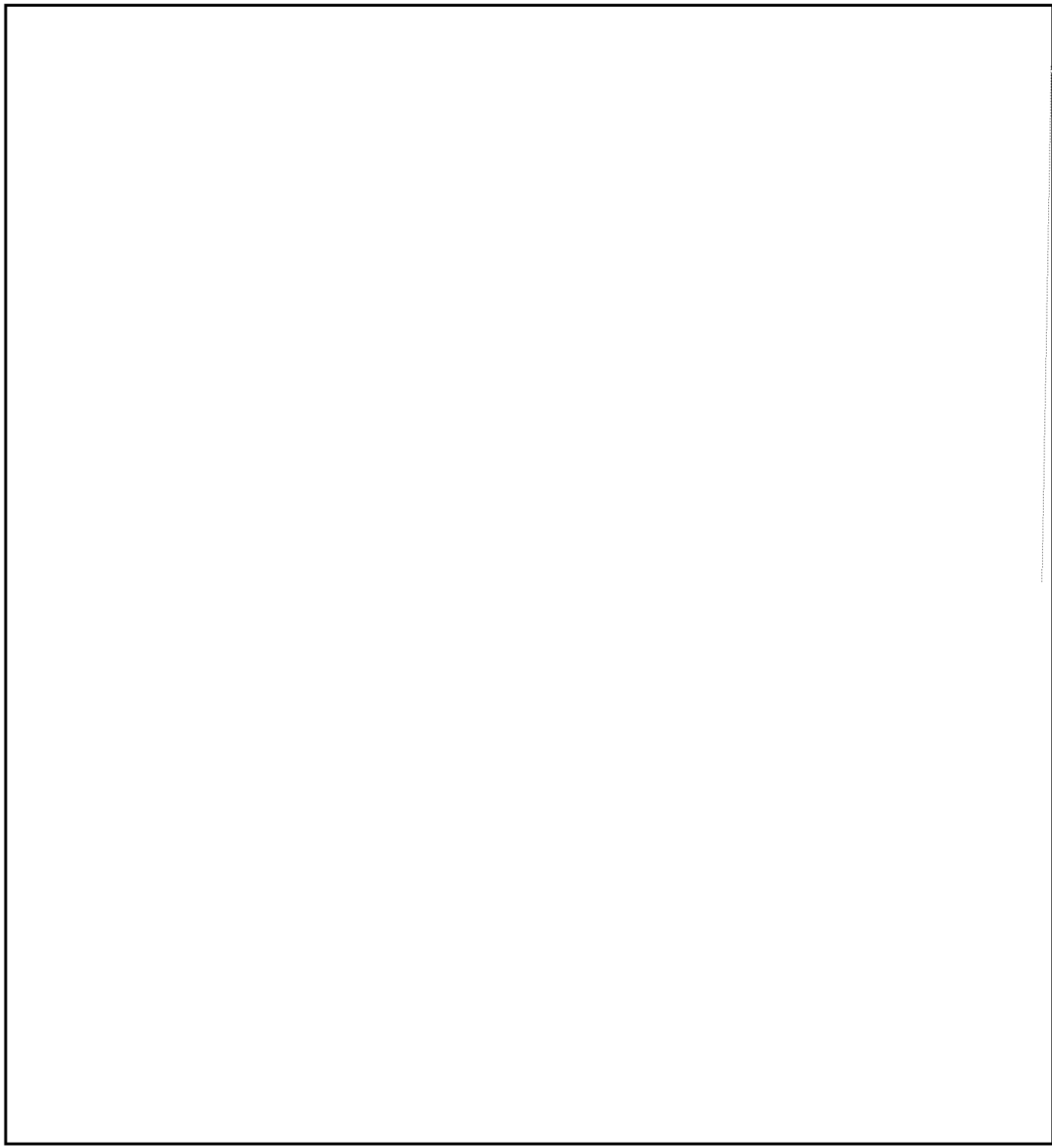
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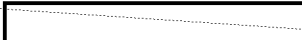
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~  02/11/2011



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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(U)~~ [redacted] 02/11/2011

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Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

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To: Countertenor From: Charlotte
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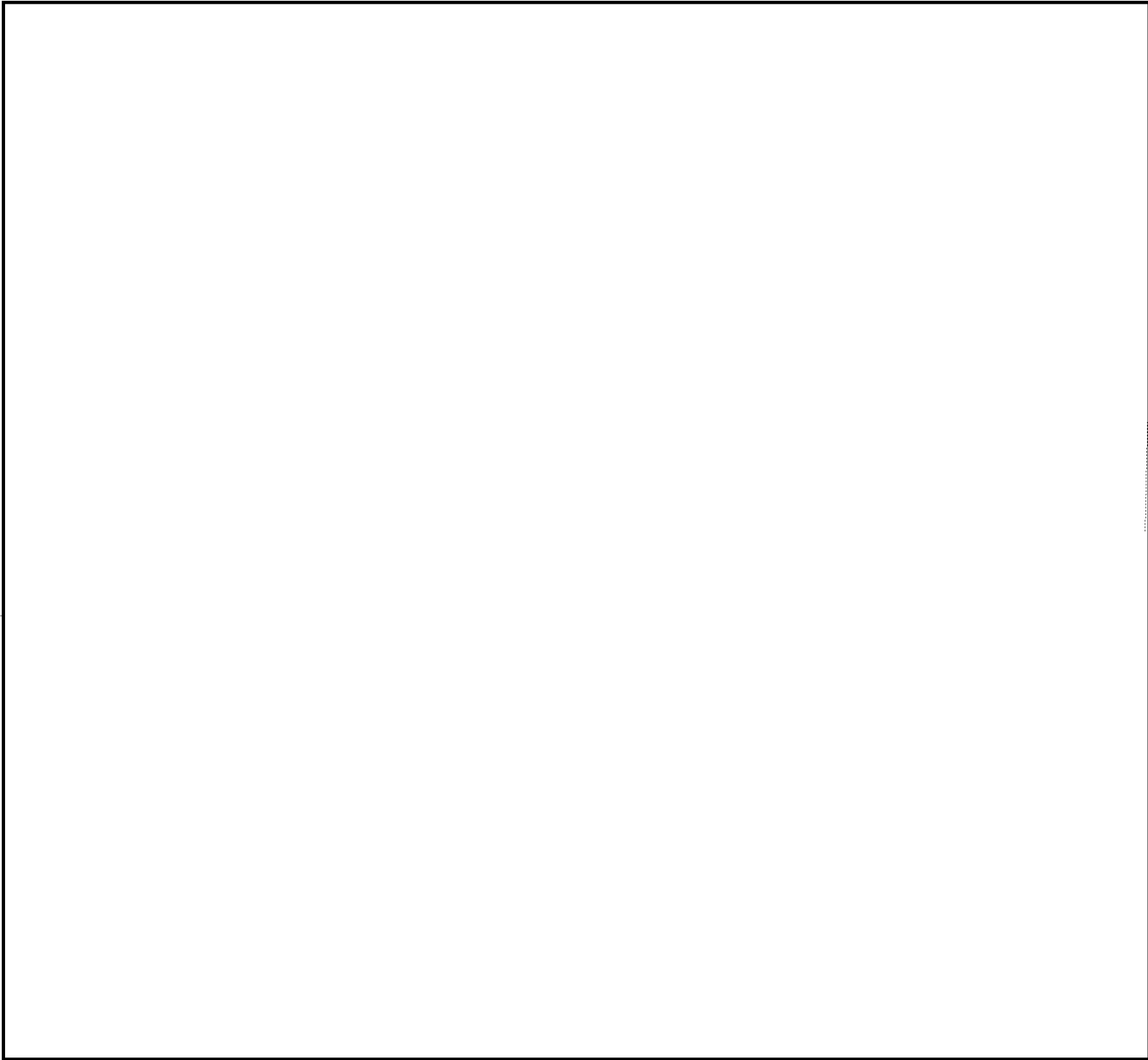
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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 02/11/2011



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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

LEADS:

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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(U) [redacted] For information only.

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted] For information only.

Set Lead 3: (Action)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

[redacted]

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Set Lead 4: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

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Set Lead 5: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 02/11/2011

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 6: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 7: (Info)

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AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOI/PA
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET
FOI/PA# 1193607-0

Total Deleted Page(s) = 292

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Page 348 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 349 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 350 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 351 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 352 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 353 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 354 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 355 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 356 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 357 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 358 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 359 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 360 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 361 ~ b1; b3; b7E;

Page 362 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 363 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 364 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 365 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 366 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 367 ~ b7E;
Page 374 ~ b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 375 ~ b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 376 ~ b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 377 ~ b7E;
Page 378 ~ b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 379 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7D; b7E;
Page 380 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7D; b7E;
Page 381 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7D; b7E;
Page 385 ~ b1; b3; b6; b7C; b7E;
Page 386 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 387 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 388 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 389 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 390 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 391 ~ b1; b3; b7E;
Page 396 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 397 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 398 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 402 ~ Referral/Consult;
Page 403 ~ Referral/Consult;
Page 404 ~ Referral/Consult;
Page 405 ~ Referral/Consult;

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X For this Page X
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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/17/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

From: General Counsel

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b7E

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Contact: [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

(U) Case ID #: (S) [redacted] (Pending) [redacted]

(U) Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

Synopsis: (S) [redacted] (S)

~~Derived From: Multiple Sources~~

~~Declassify On: 02/25/2036~~

(U) Classification Authority Reference: (S) FBI NSISCG 20090615

Enclosure(s): (S) [redacted] (S)

Details: (S) [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

To: Charlotte

From: General Counsel

(U) Re: ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] 03/17/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) READ AND CLEAR

Set Lead 2: (Action)

[REDACTED]

AT [REDACTED]

b1
b3
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[REDACTED]

(S)

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 1/18/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: [REDACTED] (S)

Title: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

Synopsis: (U) To provide information concerning attempts to re-interview Subject.

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360118~~

(U) [REDACTED]

Details: (U) Subsequent to SA [REDACTED] attempts to contact and re-interview [REDACTED] she returned a telephone call on 01/13/2011 and provided the following information:

(U) [REDACTED] was reluctant to be re-interviewed by the FBI and requested that she be interviewed telephonically. SA [REDACTED] advised that he had some documents (photocopies of INSPIRE magazine) related to Samir Khan, to show her and that he and [REDACTED] would like to sit down with [REDACTED] and talk over a few things.

(U) [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED] and that she didn't have anything

~~SECRET~~

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① KHAN TEAM



~~SECRET~~

(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 1/18/2011

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to say, in addition to what she had already told us. [redacted]
reiterated that [redacted] and
that, [redacted]

b6
b7C

(U) [redacted] advised that she would think about
consenting to another (face to face) interview and that she would
contact SA [redacted] if she decided to do so. She stated that
she continues to reside in [redacted] area.

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(SA [redacted] will follow up with [redacted]
periodically, in an effort to gain her consent to be re-
interviewed.)

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♦♦

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 02/15/2011

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA

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Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U) (Pending)

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b7E

(U) Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(U) Synopsis: (S) To document the names/kunyas/identifiers of
individuals/entities of interest to the FBI who will be further
investigated in the near future.

(S) Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301
Declassify On: 02/15/2036

Administrative: (S//NF)

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(U)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/15/2011

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Details:

BACKGROUND ON SAMIR KHAN

(S) (S//NF [redacted]) In late 2006, Samir Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from his parents' home in Charlotte, NC. On his online blog, as well as on several other online forums and web sites with similar content, Khan expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [redacted] (S)

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[redacted] Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections," which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/15/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 02/15/2011

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

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~~SECRET~~ //VF

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[redacted] (FBI)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2011 12:14 PM

To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]

Subject: RE: [redacted] (S)

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[redacted] (S)

Team Khan

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2011 11:47 AM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
Subject: [redacted] (S)

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[redacted] (S)

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2011 11:32 AM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: [redacted] (S)

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[redacted] (S)

SSA [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] (STE)
[redacted] (NSTS)

b6
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From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2011 11:28 AM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: FW: [redacted] (S)

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[redacted]

[Redacted]

(S)
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Team Khan

From: [Redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2011 10:33 AM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted] (S)

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FYI –

[Redacted] (S)

That should cover it.

[Redacted]

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~~SECRET~~ *AK*
2

[redacted] (FBI)

~~SECRET~~ NF

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2011 12:56 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: update

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE b6
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[redacted]

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Best,

[redacted]

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~~SECRET~~ NF

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[redacted]

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 03/07/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA

A/UC

Attn: LEGAT

Attn:

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U)

(Pending)

(S)

(S)

Title: (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

(S)

Synopsis: (S)

(S)

(S)

Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301

Declassify On: 03/07/2036

Administrative: (S//NF)

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

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b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/07/2011

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[redacted]

(U) [redacted]

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Details: (S//NF) [redacted]

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b7E

[redacted]

(S)

(S) (S//NF) [redacted] The Charlotte Division's investigation of KHAN between 2007 and 2009 revealed KHAN, a self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi, becoming increasingly religious and radical. Of significance, this investigation revealed that KHAN: [redacted]

b1
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[redacted] (2) became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; (3) was reported to have expressed an interest in becoming a martyr and (4) created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections."

(S)

(S)

[redacted]

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/07/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/07/2011

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(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/07/2011



(S)

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ In July 2010, AQAP released its first issue of an online, English-language magazine known as "Inspire." This issue contained advice on making a bomb and preparing for jihad. Intelligence reporting surrounding the release indicated that KHAN was likely a major contributor to the publication.

(U) In October 2010, AQAP released its second issue of "Inspire." In this issue, which encouraged jihad and provided advice on how to conduct jihad, Khan openly wrote an article entitled "I Am Proud to Be A Traitor To America." Within this article, Khan pledged his oath of allegiance to Usama bin Ladin and stated "We pledge to wage jihad for the rest of our lives..."



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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/07/2011

[redacted] (S)

(U) In November 2010, AQAP released its third issue of "Inspire." In this issue of "Inspire" AQAP boasted of its role in the parcel-bomb plot. AQAP declared the parcel-bomb plot a success based upon the cost of increased security measures adopted by the West in return for its relatively meager investment of \$4,200.

(U) In January 2011, AQAP released its fourth issue of "Inspire." In this issue, KHAN penned an article in his own name entitled "The Central Issue." In this article, KHAN wrote that jihad is obligatory for all Muslims.

[redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/07/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[redacted]

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AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-01-2019

b6
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[REDACTED] (FBI)

b6
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b7E

From: Forms Work Flow
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2011 11:55 AM
To: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Subject: Request Analysis - [REDACTED]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

[REDACTED] has been changed

b3
b7E

Modify my alert settings View [REDACTED] View Request Analysis

Case File Number: [REDACTED]

Type of Analysis or Support: Intelligence Analysis

Type of Intelligence Product Requested: Intelligence Assessment

Security Classification: S//NF [REDACTED] (S)

b1
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Request Details:

[REDACTED] (S)

Records to be Analyzed:

Requested by Date: 2/25/2010

Program: Counterterrorism

Subprogram:

Issue:

Threat Priority:

Submitter:

Squad:

Location:

cc Other Case Agent:

Item Status: Not Started Completed

Edited

Task Priority:

Tactical/Strategic:

Assigned To:

Month: 2010/01 (January)

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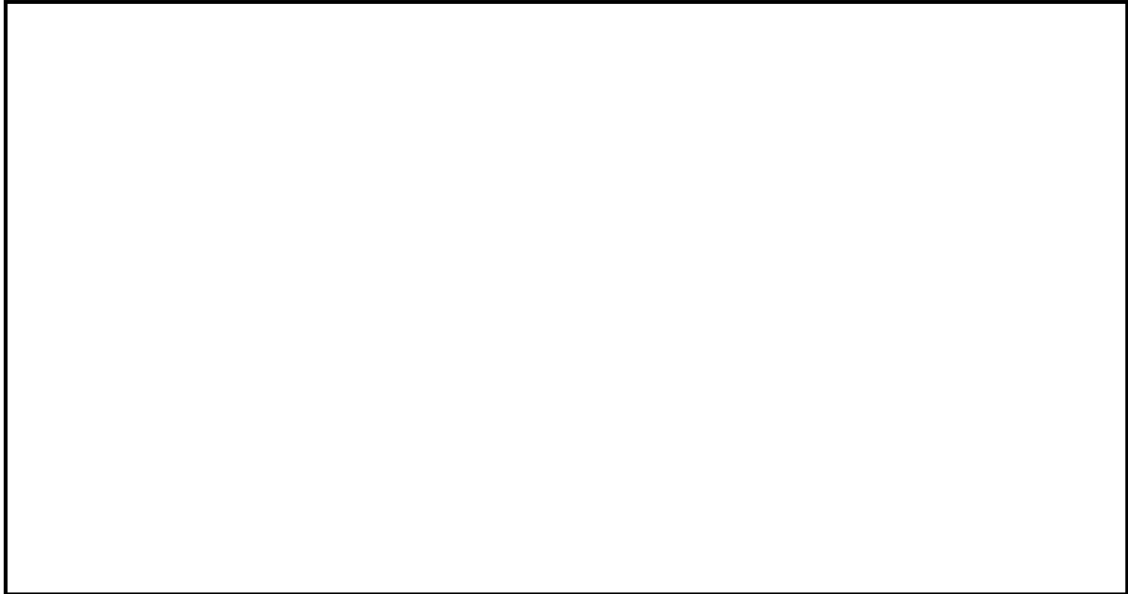
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~~SECRET~~

Discussion Area:

A brief search in FBI systems revealed the following:

Edited



(S)

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Quarter: Q2

Fiscal Year: FY2010

IA Priority: 0.0

Last Modified 3/8/2011 11:51 AM by (FBI)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/16/2011

To:

[Redacted]

From:

[Redacted]

Contact:

[Redacted]

Approved By:

[Redacted]

Drafted By:

[Redacted]

Case ID #:

(U)
(S)
(U)
(U)
(S)

[Redacted]

Title: (S//NF)

[Redacted]

(S//NF)

(S//NF)

(U) (S//NF)

SAMIR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMISM INSPIRED

(S//NF)

[Redacted]

Synopsis: (S)

[Redacted]

Derived From: FBI NSISCG 20080301
Declassify On: 20360316

Administrative: (S//FOUO)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: [redacted]

From: [redacted]

(S) Re: (S) [redacted] 03/16/2011

[redacted] (S)

Details: (S//NF) [redacted] (S)

Khan is a 24 year-old self-proclaimed salafi-jihadi who, from late 2005 until late 2009, administered a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog. [redacted] (S)

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[redacted] Khan is also suspected of motivating and recruiting others for jihad. As of early December 2009, Khan was located in Yemen. Khan has had extensive contact with Anwar Aulaqi and expressed an interest in meeting with Aulaqi. Since Khan arrived in Yemen, it is unknown if he attempted to find or visit Aulaqi.

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[redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

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To:

From:

03/16/2011

(S)

Re:

(X)

(S)

X

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

b1
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b7A

To:

From:

03/16/2011

(S)

Re:

(X)

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

To: [redacted]

From: [redacted]

(S)

Re: (X) [redacted]

03/16/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

To:

From:

(S)

Re:

(S)

03/16/2011

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(S)

To:

From:

03/16/2011

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Re:

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

To:

From:

03/16/2011

Re:

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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b7A

To:

From:

03/16/2011

(S)

Re:

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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To:

From:

03/16/2011

Re:

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To:

From:

(S)

Re:

(S)

03/16/2011

(S)

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/07/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: [REDACTED]

b6
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b7E

From: [REDACTED]

Contact: IOA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

b3
b7E

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED]

(U) Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

Synopsis: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

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b7E~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20090615~~
~~Declassify On: 20360307~~

(U) [REDACTED]

b7E

Reference: (U) [REDACTED]

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Details: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

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b7C~~SECRET/NOFORN~~b3
b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~

To: [REDACTED] From: [REDACTED]
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 03/07/2011

b3
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Accomplishment Information:

Number: 1
Type: [REDACTED]
ITU: [REDACTED] (S)
Claimed By:
SSN: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED]
Squad: [REDACTED]

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~

To: Charlotte From: [REDACTED]
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 03/07/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~

SA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-02-2019

SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN [REDACTED]

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(S)



Most Wanted Terrorists

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE



March 16, 2011

Selection Committee

SEEKING INFORMATION

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SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN [REDACTED]

(S)

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-02-2019

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SECRET



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WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Samir Khan SMIL Briefing

3/16/2011

"Team Khan"



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SECRET

(S)

Samir Khan Overview

- (U) 25 years old (POB – Saudi Arabia)
- (U) USPER
- (U) Moved to Charlotte in 2003 and lived with parents in upper middle class neighborhood until 2009
- (U) Was very active on the Internet while living with his parents

(S) • ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] Self-proclaimed Salafi Jihadi

(S) • ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] Moved to Yemen in mid October 2009 – study, teach, possible hijra

(S) • ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] Currently operational with AQAP



(S)

FBI INTEREST

- Case opened in January 2007



(S)

b1
b3
b7E

- Investigation of Khan while he was in the US revealed that he:
 - became more radical
 - became a radicalizing influence on many individuals
 - became more religious



(S)

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b3
b7E

Khan's Radicalization Efforts

- Involve both indirect and direct contacts (online and face-to-face) to spread extremist propaganda as well as radicalize individuals to extremist ideology.
- Khan was/is behind the following extremist works aimed at radicalizing individuals:
 - The Ignored Puzzle Pieces of Knowledge (blog)
 - Password-protected forums (private chat, public postings)
 - YouTube (media)
 - Jihad Recollections (online magazine)
 - Inspire (online magazine)



- Khan has had a role in both domestic and international radicalization efforts.



~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Radicalization Timeline

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

FBI – Charlotte Division

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

Radicalization Timeline

b1
b3
b7E

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

FBI – Charlotte Division

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCO~~

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Radicalization Timeline

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

FBI – Charlotte Division

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S)

Current Situation

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-
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-

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FBI - Charlotte Division

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b7E

~~SECRET~~

Current Situation

REQUESTING/OUTSTANDING

- Seeking More Information List
- 
- Criminal Complaint
- Designation

b7E

~~SECRET~~

FBI - Charlotte Division

~~SECRET~~

WHY SMIL PUBLICITY ON KHAN WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1. The more people who are aware of Khan, and the USG's interest in Khan, the better chance the USIC has to 1) obtain information to fill intelligence gaps, 2) disrupt AQAP's media operations/efforts, and 3) capture Khan.
 - If a reward is added, that will be an additional motivator for the public to cooperate.
2. Publicity on Khan will serve as a "black mark" to potentially deter people from contacting or wanting to work with Khan in his nefarious activity/efforts out of fear of being caught/identified by the USG.

b7E

(S)

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~~SECRET~~

FBI - Charlotte Division

~~SECRET~~

"Team Khan"

- SA [REDACTED] FBI
- SA [REDACTED]
- IA [REDACTED] FBI
- SOS [REDACTED] FBI

704/377-9200

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FBI – Charlotte Division

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UNCLASSIFIED



Questions?

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-11-2019

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~~UNCLASSIFIED~~



**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
MOST WANTED TERRORIST PROGRAM
COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION
THREAT REVIEW UNIT**

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

March 2011 Selection Committee

Table of Contents

Background Materials

- MWTP Nominees at a Glance
- Most Wanted Terrorist Program Overview
- Annual Nomination Canvass EC
 - Includes history of the program, criteria, current MWTL and SMIL

(S) Tab 1: [REDACTED] Nomination Materials

- Selection Committee Presentation slides
- MWTP Nomination EC

b1
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b7C

Tab 2: [REDACTED] Nomination Materials

- Public Interpol Poster
- Public Rewards for Justice Poster
- MWTP Nomination EC

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b7C

Tab 3: [REDACTED] Nomination Materials

- MWTP Nomination EC

Tab 4: Samir Khan Nomination Materials

- Selection Committee Presentation Slides
- MWTP Nomination EC

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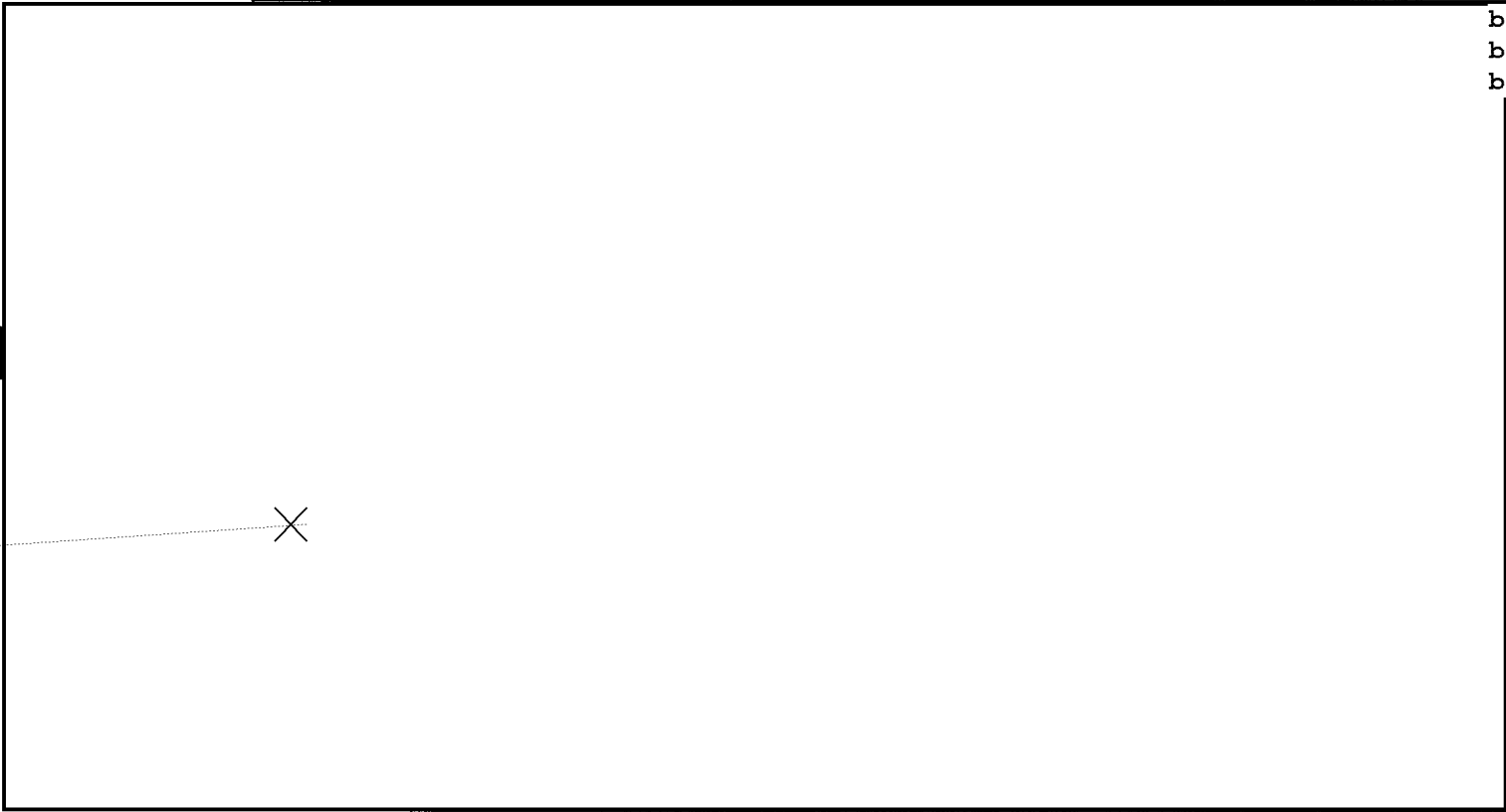
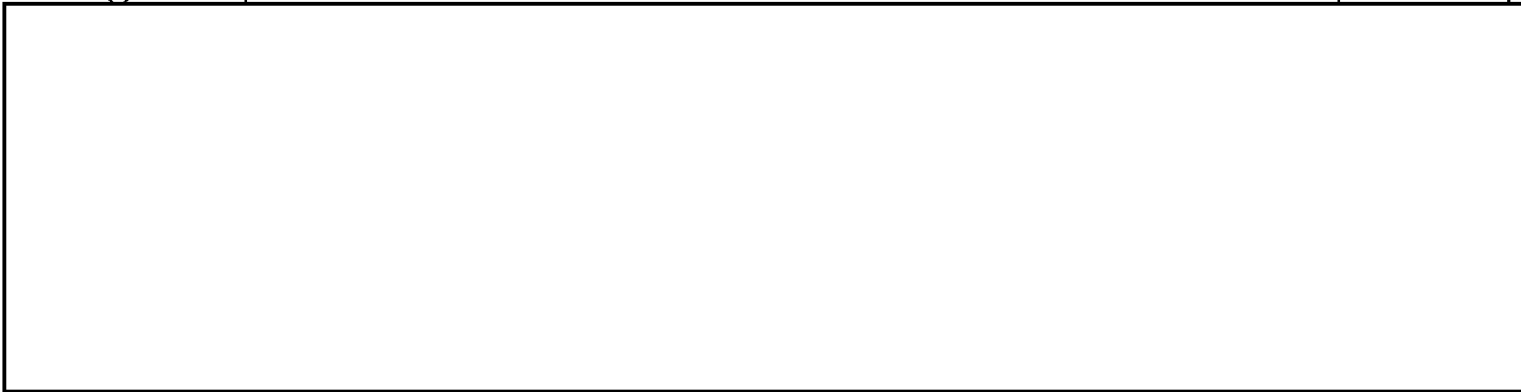


~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted] b6
REASON: 1.4 (C) b7C
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-11-2019 b1
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b7C

2011 MWTP Nominees at a Glance

MOST WANTED TERRORIST LIST NOMINEES:



SEEKING MORE INFORMATION LIST NOMINEE: b3

Samir Khan: [redacted] b7E
SA [redacted] Charlotte Field Office b6
b7C

(S/NF) [redacted] Heavily involved with AQAP, Khan's main role is administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from [redacted] home in Charlotte, NC. He has become a radicalizing influence on others, motivating/recruiting for jihad. b1
b3
b7E

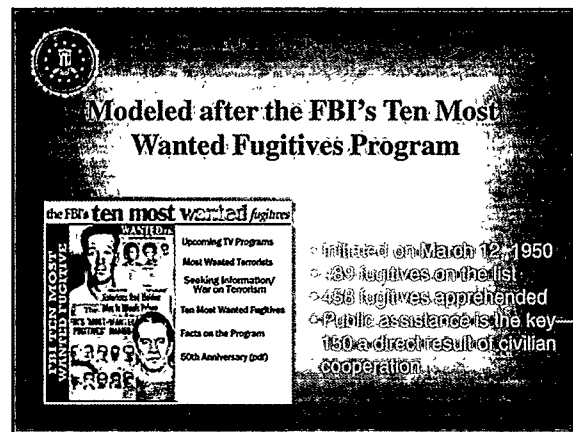
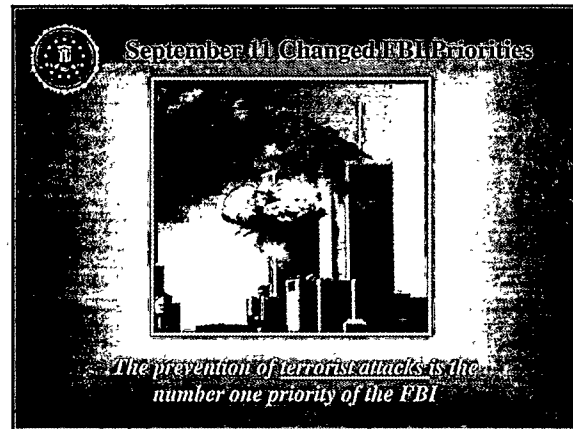
Investigative Points of Contact: SSA [redacted] b6
RFJ Status: No reward currently b7C
b7E

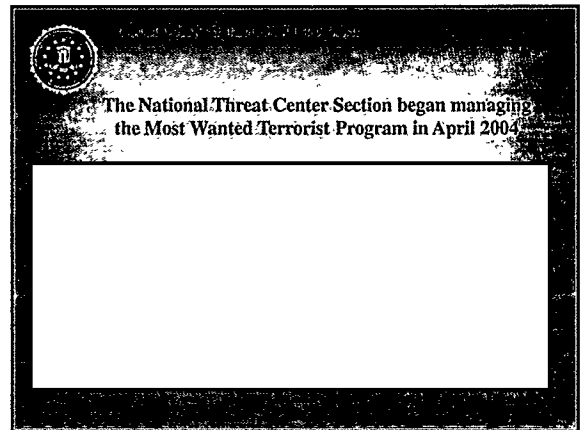
Legal Status: Not indicted, a criminal complaint is currently in draft. Charges being considered include [redacted]

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

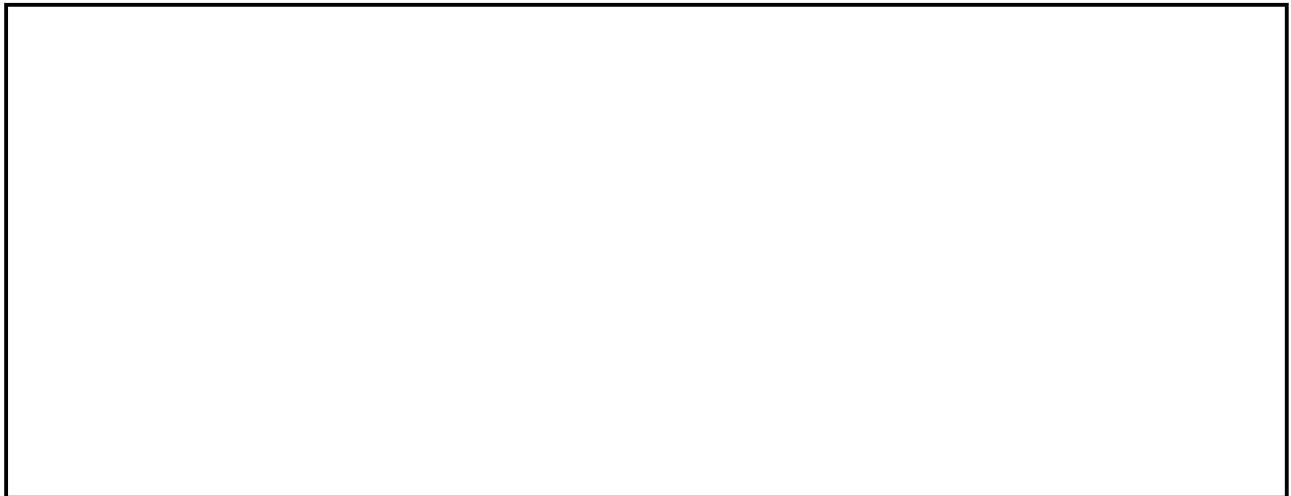
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b7E




b7E




b7E

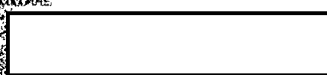
 **Rewards for Capture**



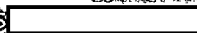

The Rewards for Justice Program, United States Department of State, is offering rewards of up to \$25 million for information leading directly to the apprehension of Most Wanted Terrorists.

 **CURRENT STATUS**

There are 4 nomination packages in place

- MWAL

- SMUL
Samir Zafar Khan- Charlotte

CONTACT INFORMATION

SOS  at 

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b7C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 04-11-2019 BY NSICG

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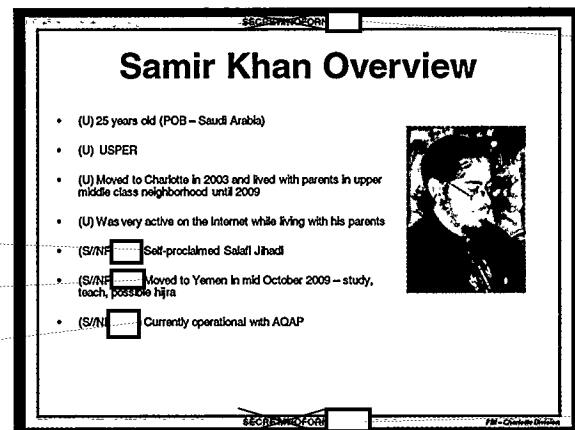
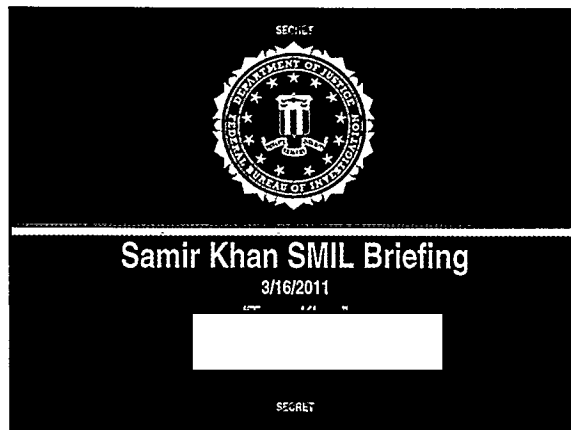
KHAN

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-11-2019

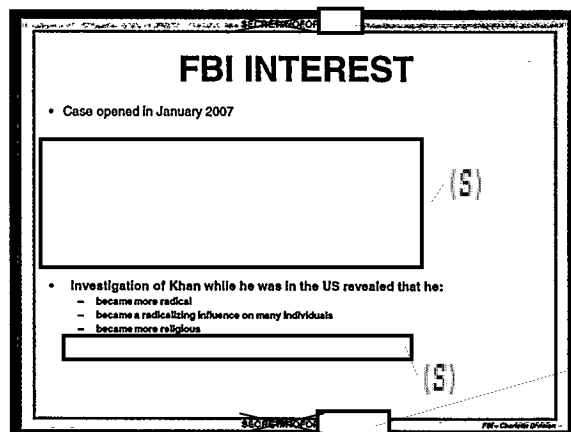
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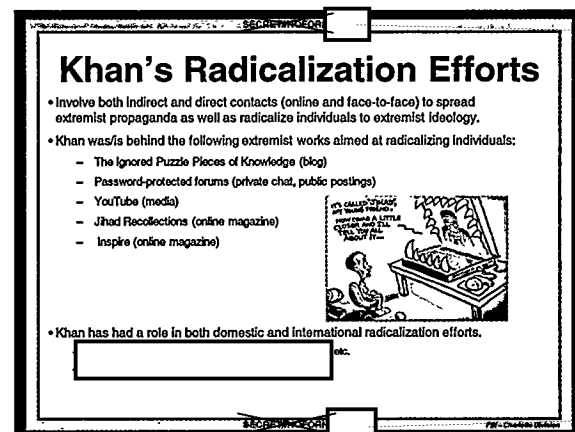


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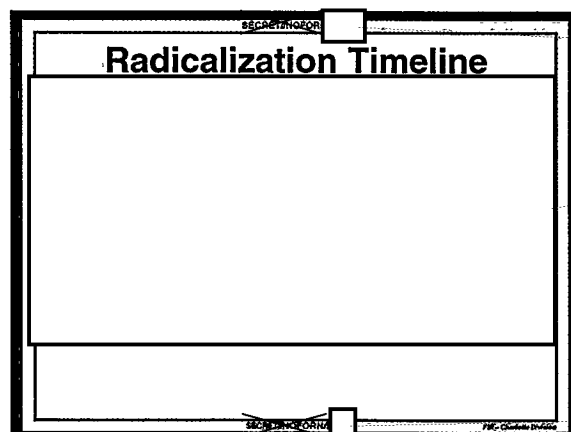


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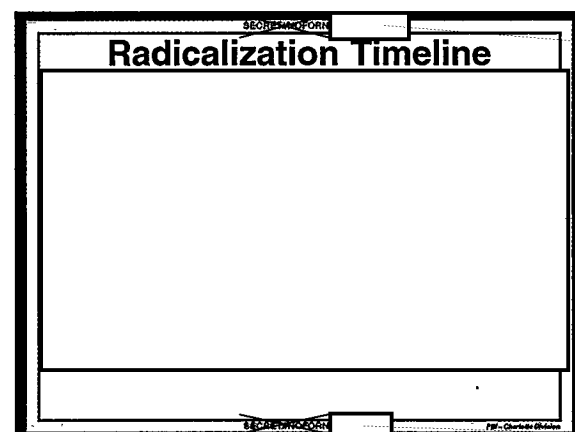


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~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

Radicalization Timeline

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted] FBI - Charlotte Division

(S)

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(S)

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

Current Situation

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted] FBI - Charlotte Division

(S)

(S)

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~~SECRET~~

Current Situation

REQUESTING/OUTSTANDING

- Seeking More Information List
[redacted]
- Criminal Complaint
- Designation

~~SECRET~~ FBI - Charlotte Division

~~SECRET~~

WHY SMIL PUBLICITY ON KHAN WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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2. Publicity on Khan will serve as a "black mark" to potentially deter people from contacting or wanting to work with Khan in his nefarious activity/efforts out of fear of being caught/identified by the USG.

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~ FBI - Charlotte Division

(S)

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~~SECRET~~


"Team Khan"

- SA [redacted] FBI
- SA [redacted]
- IA [redacted] FBI
- SOS [redacted] FBI

704/377-9200

~~SECRET~~ FBI - Charlotte Division

UNCLASSIFIED



Questions?

UNCLASSIFIED

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
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DATE: 04-04-2019

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED]

(S)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 12/15/2010

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [REDACTED]

SOS [REDACTED]

SSA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte [REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED] (Pending)

b3
b7E

(U) Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(U) Synopsis: ~~(S)~~ Request that Samir Khan be placed on the FBI's
Seeking More Information List (SMIL).

~~(S)~~ Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301
Declassify On: 12/15/2035

Reference: (U) [REDACTED]

b3
b7E

Administrative: (S//~~NF~~) [REDACTED]

b1
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b7E

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED]

(S)

b6
b7C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-04-2019 BY NSICG



~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/21/2011

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U) [redacted]
(U)

b3
b7E

(U) Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(U) Synopsis: ~~(S)~~ To request a -TIPS subfile be created for captioned case.

~~Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360321~~

(U) [redacted]

b7E

(U) Details: ~~(S)~~ On 03/16/2011, the MWTP/SMIL Board unanimously voted in favor of adding Samir Khan to the SMIL. Upon FBI executive management approval, Khan's addition to the SMIL will go public and the FBI may receive tips on information related to Khan. In addition, CE plans to request an [redacted] on Khan, thereby [redacted] Khan.

b7E

(U) ~~(S)~~ Writer requests that a -TIPS subfile be opened and assigned to writer. This subfile will act as a repository for any tips or leads that result from publicity surrounding Khan's addition to the SMIL. This subfile will also serve as a repository for any tips or leads that result from [redacted] on Khan.

b7E

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/07/2011

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

[REDACTED]
Contact: [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED]
(U)
(U)

(U) Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

(U) STATS

(U) LIAISON

Synopsis: (U) To document 45 liaison contacts between writer and [REDACTED] liaison from January 1, 2011 to March 1, 2011.

(S)

~~Derived From : G-1~~
~~Declassify On: 03/07/2036~~

(U) Details: (S) From 01/01/2011 to 03/01/2011, writer exchanged Samir Khan case-related information with writer's designated [REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~b6
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b7E

b7E

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b7C
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b7Cb3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 03/07/2011

b3
b7E

Accomplishment Information:

Number: 45

Type: [REDACTED]

ITU: [REDACTED]

Claimed By:

SSN: [REDACTED]

Name: [REDACTED]

Squad: [REDACTED]

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b7E

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED]b1
b3
b7EALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/11/2011

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

[REDACTED]
Contact: [REDACTED]b6
b7C
b7E

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) ✓ [REDACTED]
(U)b3
b7E(U) Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

(U) STATS

(U) Synopsis: ~~(S)~~ To document stats to date in captioned case.~~(S)~~~~Derived From : G-1~~~~Declassify On: 03/11/2036~~

Details: ~~(S)~~ (U) This report documents all statistics earned from 12/21/2010 to present. The majority of these stats were a team effort and thus, all team members will receive credit for the majority of the below-listed stats. Due to high workload, substantial details of the below statistics are not included in this EC. See case file or [REDACTED]

b7E

for further details.

(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED]b3
b7E(U) ~~(S)~~ Disseminations to [REDACTED]b7D
b7E~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)b1
b3
b7Eb3
b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/11/2011

b1
b3
b7E

[redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E
b7E

(U) (S) The [redacted] held a [redacted] with [redacted] as well as other FBI entities, on 1/12/11. Operational planning re: Khan and Anwar Aulagi was discussed. At this [redacted] writer provided a verbal case presentation.

(U) (S) Writer and SA [redacted] traveled to [redacted] and provided a case presentation to the [redacted] on 1/19/11.

b6
b7C
b7E

(U) (S) Writer attended operational training on [redacted] (used in captioned case) from 1/24/11 to 1/28/11.

b7E

[redacted] (S)

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b7D

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/11/2011

b1
b3
b7E

Accomplishment Information:

Number: 12

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 15

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted] (S)

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted] (S)

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

b1
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b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 03/11/2011

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]
ITU: [redacted]

b7E

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]
Name: [redacted]
Squad: [redacted]

b6
b7C

Number: 2

Type: [redacted]

b7E

[redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]
Name: [redacted]
Squad: [redacted]

b6
b7C

Number: 12

Type: [redacted]

b7E

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]
Name: [redacted]
Squad: [redacted]

b6
b7C

Number: 15

Type: [redacted]

b7E

ITU: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]
Name: [redacted]
Squad: [redacted]

b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

b7E

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]
Name: [redacted]
Squad: [redacted]

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b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/11/2011

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 12

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 15

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

b6
b7C

Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

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Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/11/2011

Number: 12

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

b7E

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Number: 15

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

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Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

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Number: 1

Type: [redacted]

ITU: [redacted]

Claimed By:

SSN: [redacted]

Name: [redacted]

Squad: [redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-04-2019

~~SECRET~~

(FBI)

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b6
b7C

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 8:15 AM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
Subject: [redacted] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b1
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Here they are:

b7E

Thanks-

b6
b7C

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2010 1:21 PM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: FW: [redacted] (S)

b1
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b7C

FYI.

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b7C

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2010 1:14 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~
~~RECORD~~

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b7E

[redacted]
Management and Program Analyst
[redacted]
[redacted] (desk)
[redacted] (blackberry)

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b3
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b7C

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

~~DERIVED FROM: Multiple Sources~~
~~DECLASSIFICATION EXEMPTION 1~~
~~SECRET~~

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-04-2019

b6
b7C

[REDACTED] (FBI)

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 5:42 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:
Subject: FW: Samir Khan in Yemen - Update 03/18/2011

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b6
b7C
b7E

[REDACTED] - can you please provide a printout of this to the [REDACTED] each week?

b7E

b6
b7C

Thanks-

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 5:35 PM
To: [REDACTED]

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b7E

Subject: Samir Khan in Yemen - Update 03/18/2011

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~~SECRET~~

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[REDACTED]

b1
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(U) ~~(S)~~ OVERVIEW OF FBI INVESTIGATION INTO SAMIR KHAN:

(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] In late 2006, Samir Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from his parents' home in Charlotte, NC. On this online blog, as well as on several other online blogs, forums, and web sites with similar content, Khan expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's popular online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [REDACTED]

b1
b3
b7E

[REDACTED] Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections," which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

(S)

[REDACTED]

b1
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b7E

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED]

b7E

[REDACTED]

b1
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b7E

~~SECRET~~

[Redacted]

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

Thanks-

SA

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~

[Redacted]

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-04-2019

b6
b7C

b6
b7C

[redacted]
From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 11:33 AM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Re: [redacted]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

(S) Hi [redacted] no we haven't actually received one in a few months. [redacted] they will not provide
me a statement over the counter, nor email, nor fax. Pain in the toosh! Anyways, [redacted] has contacted [redacted] who
in turn has to contact [redacted] We are thinking the mailing address somehow got changed. Sorry this has become
such a mess. As soon as we get an answer I will let you know. Thanks and have a great weekend too.

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

[redacted]
Charlotte Division
[redacted]

From: [redacted]
To: [redacted]
Sent: Fri Feb 11 10:53:51 2011
Subject:

b6
b7C

Hi [redacted]

I just wanted to check with you and see if you ever received [redacted] Thanks -- have a good (S) weekend!

b1
b3
b7E

Thank You,

[redacted]
Administrative Specialist - Finance
FBI - Charlotte Office
[redacted]

b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-04-2019

b6
b7C

[redacted]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 07, 2011 8:03 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Re: question

b6
b7C

(S) [redacted] The guy who set the original account up put [redacted] not [redacted] I had them change the
account to [redacted] so I'm not sure what happened there.

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

Charlotte Division
[redacted]

From: [redacted]
To: [redacted]
Sent: Fri Jan 07 07:58:53 2011
Subject: question

b6
b7C

Hi [redacted]

[redacted] brought me your [redacted]
got? It says [redacted] but I am not sure who that is. Thanks!

b1
(S)b3
b7E
b6
b7C
b6
b7C

Thank You,
[redacted]
Administrative Specialist - Finance
FBI - Charlotte Office
[redacted]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-04-2019

b6
b7C

[redacted] (FBI)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 2:04 PM
To: [redacted]

Subject: [redacted] (S)

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b7C

[Large redacted area]

b3
b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

[redacted]

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/31/2011

To:

[Redacted]

Counterterrorism

Attn:

SA

Attn:

SSA

Attn:

SSA

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte

Contact:

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #:

(S)
(U)
(S)

Title: (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b6
b7C
b7E

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

Reference:

Synopsis:

To provide [Redacted] with questions for [Redacted]
[Redacted] regarding [Redacted] Samir Khan.

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360331

Details: Pursuant to the above-referenced Serial, [Redacted]
Division requested Charlotte Division to submit proposed
interview questions [Redacted]

Samir

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b7E
b6
b7C

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

b1
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b6
b7C

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

b3
b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: [redacted] From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/31/2011

b3
b7E

Khan. Below are Charlotte's proposed interview questions for

(S) b1
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b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: [REDACTED] From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED], 03/31/2011

b3
b7E

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b7E
b6
b7C

b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: [redacted] From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/31/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Information)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted]

Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Information)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted]

Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Information)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U)

Read and clear.

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-04-2019

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b7C

(Rev. 05-01-2008)

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/31/2011

To: International Operations

Attn: [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

Counterterrorism

Attn: [REDACTED]

SSA [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte [REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: [REDACTED]

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

Title: [REDACTED]

(S)

Synopsis: Request issuance of [REDACTED] for [REDACTED]
subject documented in enclosed application.

(S)

Enclosure(s):

One (1) copy of [REDACTED]

Two (2) copies of photographs.

b7E

Details: Writer respectfully requests [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] subject, who is [REDACTED]
documented within the enclosed application, [REDACTED]

(S)

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~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

(S) To: [redacted] From: Charlotte
Re: [redacted] (Pending), 03/31/2011

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b7E

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Action)

[redacted]

b6
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b7E

[redacted] as requested (enclosures and cover EC
will be emailed to [redacted] and
[redacted] and advise CE upon completion.

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

b7E

For information.

♦♦

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~

b6
b7C



~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE b1
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b7E

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

To:

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 04/11/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [REDACTED]

SSA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte [REDACTED]

Contact: SSA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U)
(S) [REDACTED] (S)

b1
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b7E

Title: (S) (U) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S) [REDACTED] (S)

b1
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b7E

Synopsis: (S//NF) [REDACTED] (S)

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360411

b3
b7E

Reference: (U) [REDACTED]

Administrative: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)

b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

b1
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b7E

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/11/2011

Details: (S//~~REF~~)

[redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/11/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/11/2011

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(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/11/2011

LEADS:

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

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b7E

[redacted] (S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

b7E

COUNTERTERRORISM

[redacted]

(U) (S) [redacted]

For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-09-2019

[REDACTED] (FBI)

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 12:26 PM
To: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Subject: RE: Khan's SMIL Status

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

[REDACTED]

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b7C

I apologize! I should have been more clear...

We recently received the AD's approval and were in the process of getting SMIL subject Anwar Aulaqi added to the public website (who was approved last year but not for public dissemination) when [REDACTED] from RFJ advised the following:

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b7C

[REDACTED]

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That is why we added the specific wording in the pending EC to indicate Khan is approved for addition to the SMIL, but will not be publicly advertised until directed by the AD, OPA, AD, CTD.

Please let me know if you have any further questions, and I will keep you updated with any new information we receive.

V/R,

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 11:46 AM
To: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Subject: RE: Khan's SMIL Status

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[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

[redacted] no changes on our end. Thanks for the update. If you can provide any further details on the "sensitivities" that would be great!

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From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 8:15 AM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
Subject: Khan's SMIL Status

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~Derived from: Multiple Sources~~
~~Declassify on: (20360405)~~

Good Morning [redacted]

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b7C

Hope Charlotte is treating you well.

I wanted to check in with you on the status of Khan to see if there have been any changes related to his criminal status, to ensure the pending MWTP Committee Results EC is still accurate.

The EC summarizing the results of the MWTP Selection Committee has been ready for approval since our meeting, but it's on hold at the moment due to sensitivities on your subject. I've been instructed to add in a clause stating, "Due to sensitivities related to Khan's AQAP affiliation, public dissemination of Khan's SMIL status will not occur at this time. AD, CTD will authorize public release in coordination with the AD, OPA at an undetermined later date."

So essentially, Khan would be on the SMIL...it just would not be public information yet.

My apologies for the delay- hopefully we can proceed this week and obviously I'll let you know as soon as the EC is approved by the AD. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

V/R,

[redacted]

b6
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SOS [redacted]
National Threat Center Section
Threat Review Unit
FBIHQ [redacted]

[redacted]

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (B,C,D)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-08-2019

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/28/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA

Attn:

SA
SA
SA

Attn: LEGAT

Attn:

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #:

(U)
(U)
(U)
(U)
(U)

(S)

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b7E

(U) Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

(S)

(S)

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

(S)

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b6
b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/28/2011

Synopsis: (S) [redacted] (S)

(S)

~~Derived From : FBI NSISGC, 20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 03/28/2036~~

Reference: (U) [redacted]

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Administrative: (S//NF) [redacted] (S)

(U) [redacted]

b7E

Details:

CASE BACKGROUND

(S) (S//NF) [redacted] In late 2006, Samir Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from his parents' home in Charlotte, NC. On this online blog, as well as on several other online blogs, forums, and web sites with similar content, Khan expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's popular online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E

[redacted] Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections," which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/28/2011

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/28/2011

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(S)

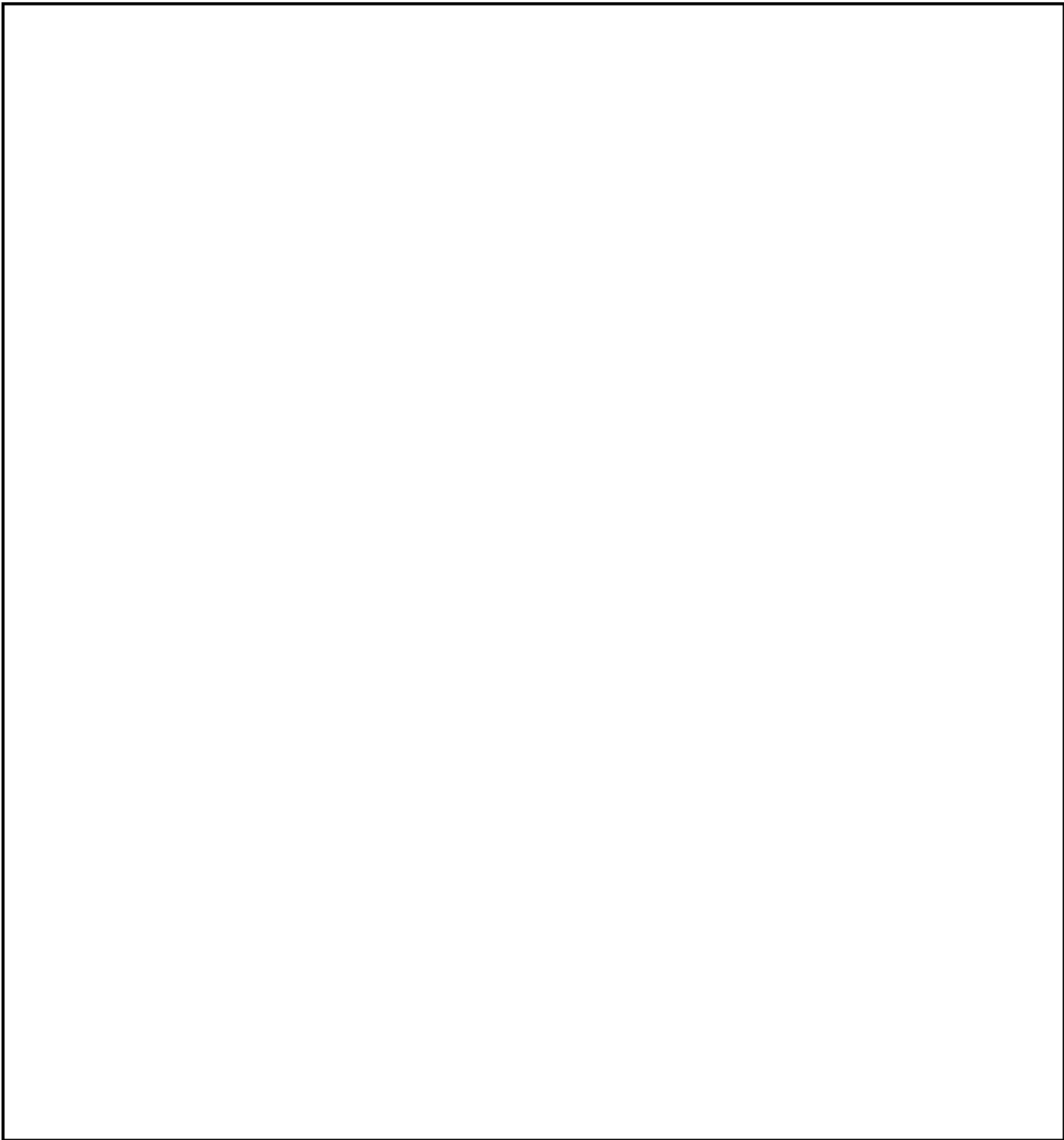
~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/28/2011



(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 03/28/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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(S) To assist in this investigation, Charlotte is providing a tearline for release [redacted] (S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

[redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

[redacted] (FBI)

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, April 08, 2011 12:27 PM
To: [redacted] (FBI); [redacted]
Subject: RE: hello

No more clarification than that. I will get with [redacted] and see where we are on the revised draft.

Thanks

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, April 08, 2011 11:15 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: hello

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b7C

[redacted] in an offline email exchange with [redacted] (after receiving her email about the FBI Intel study), she voluntarily mentioned that they (DOJ Main) [redacted]

[redacted]
Is there any more clarification on that? I know from talking to [redacted] now that Issue 5 is out. It would be great to know what our plan is going forward, i.e. [redacted]

Thanks!

[redacted]

b3
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[redacted]
[redacted]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-08-2019 BY [REDACTED] NSICG

Charlotte FBI [REDACTED]

From: "Charlotte FBI [REDACTED]"
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 3:49 PM
Attach: [REDACTED] request from Charlotte.pdf
Subject: [REDACTED] Request from FBI Charlotte - 1 of 2

b6
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b7E

Gentlemen,

Attached to this email please find a scan of an unclassified, approved, and uploaded EC that requests an

b7E

[REDACTED]
A second email will be sent very shortly with [REDACTED] application (containing [REDACTED])

[REDACTED]
Your assistance is greatly appreciated.
Respectfully,

SA [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

b6
b7C
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b3
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4/5

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-08-2019

b6
b7C

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/31/2011

To: International Operations

Attn: [REDACTED]

b6
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Counterterrorism

Attn: [REDACTED]

SSA [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte [REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: [REDACTED] (S)

b1
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Title: [REDACTED] (S)

Synopsis: Request issuance of [REDACTED] for [REDACTED] subject documented in enclosed application. (S)

Enclosure(s):

One (1) copy of [REDACTED]

Two (2) copies of photographs.

b7E

Details: Writer respectfully requests [REDACTED] (S)

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~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

To: International Operations From: Charlotte
Re: [REDACTED], 03/31/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

[REDACTED]

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b7E

AT [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] as requested (enclosures and cover EC
will be emailed to [REDACTED] and
[REDACTED] and advise CE upon completion.

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [REDACTED]

b7E

For information.

♦♦

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-08-2019 BY [redacted]

NS b6

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b7E

Charlotte FBI [redacted]

From: "Charlotte FBI" [redacted]
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 3:48 PM
Attach: [redacted] Samir Khan.doc; Samir Khan 2.jpg; Samir Khan 1.jpg
Subject: [redacted] Request from FBI Charlotte - 2 of 2
Gentlemen,
As promised, here is the second email.
Again, thank you.

Respectfully,

SA [redacted]
[redacted]

4/5/2011

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-08-2019 BY [REDACTED]

NSICG



4/5/2011

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-08-2019 BY [REDACTED]

NSICG



4/5/2011

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 04/14/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [REDACTED]

SSA [REDACTED]

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b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U)

(S)

[REDACTED] (S)

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(U) Title: (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

[REDACTED] (S)

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Synopsis: (S)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (S)

(S)

Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301
Declassify On: 04/14/2036

Administrative: (S//NF)

[REDACTED]

(S)

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [REDACTED] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/14/2011

(U) [redacted]

(S) Details: ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] Samir KHAN came to the attention of the Charlotte Division in late 2006 as a result of his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog entitled "The Ignored Puzzle Pieces of Knowledge." Through this blog, as well as through several other online forums and web sites with similar content, KHAN expressed a radical Islamic worldview.

(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [redacted] The Charlotte Division's investigation of KHAN between 2007 and 2009 revealed that KHAN, a self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi, became increasingly religious and radical. Of significance, this investigation revealed that KHAN: [redacted] (S)

[redacted] (2) became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; (3) was reported to have expressed an interest in becoming a martyr and (4) created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections."

[redacted] (S)

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ In July 2010, AQAP released its first issue of an online, English-language magazine known as "Inspire." This issue contained advice on making a bomb and preparing for jihad. Intelligence reporting surrounding the release indicated that KHAN was likely a major contributor to the publication.

(U) In October 2010, AQAP released its second issue of "Inspire." In this issue, which encouraged jihad and provided

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/14/2011

advice on how to conduct jihad, KHAN openly wrote an article entitled "I Am Proud to Be A Traitor To America." Within this article, KHAN pledged his oath of allegiance to Usama bin Ladin and stated "We pledge to wage jihad for the rest of our lives..."

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(U) In November 2010, AQAP released its third issue of "Inspire." In this issue of "Inspire," AQAP boasted of its role in the parcel-bomb plot. AQAP declared the parcel-bomb plot a success based upon the cost of increased security measures adopted by the West in return for its relatively meager investment of \$4,200.

(U) In January 2011, AQAP released its fourth issue of "Inspire." In this issue, KHAN penned an article in his own name entitled "The Central Issue." In this article, KHAN wrote that jihad is obligatory for all Muslims.

(U) On March 29, 2011, AQAP released issue five of "Inspire" magazine. In this issue, KHAN wrote an article using his real name entitled "The Egyptian" in which KHAN addressed the recent political change in Egypt and instructed his readers to choose Allah over all else.

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 04/14/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-08-2019

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[REDACTED] (FBI)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 2:43 PM
To: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Cc: (S) [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: question

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WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

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[REDACTED]

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Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 1:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: (S) [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: question

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[REDACTED]

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Thanks!

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[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

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[redacted]
From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 12:10 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] (S)
Subject: RE: question

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[redacted] (S)

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From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 11:56 AM
To: [redacted] (S)
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: question

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[redacted] (S)

Thanks

[redacted]

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 11:34 AM
(S) **To:** [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] (FBI)
Subject: RE: question

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[redacted]

Thank you,

SA [redacted]
[redacted]

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 11:08 AM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
(S) **Cc:** [redacted]
Subject: FW: question

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(S) ~~SECRET//NF~~ [redacted] NON-RECORD

[redacted]

Please contact [redacted] (S)

Thank you,

[redacted]

Office: [redacted]
STE: [redacted]
BB: [redacted]

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(S) ~~SECRET//NF~~ [redacted] NON-RECORD

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 10:15 AM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
Subject: FW: question

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From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 9:36 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: question

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[redacted] can you direct me to the right person to get my question answered?

[redacted] (S)

Thanks-

[redacted]

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOI/PA
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET
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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 04/29/2011

To:

Charlotte

Counterterrorism

Cyber

Attn: SSA

Attn: SA

Attn: SSA

IA

Attn:

Attn: SSA

SA

Attn: SSA

SOS

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From:

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

(U) Case ID #: ~~(S//REL)~~

~~(S//REL)~~

~~(S//REL)~~

(U) ~~(S//REL)~~

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(U) Title: ~~(S//REL)~~

AI-QA'IDA AND SUNNI EXTREMISTS

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Synopsis: ~~(X)~~

(S)

Classified By: F95M67K81

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301

Declassify On: 20360429

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Reference: (S//~~REL~~)

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~~SECRET//RELID~~

To: [REDACTED] From: [REDACTED]
(U) Re: (~~S//REL~~) [REDACTED] 04/29/2011

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Administrative: (~~S//REL~~) Reference is made to email communication between SA [REDACTED] FBI Charlotte, and SOS [REDACTED] on April 25, 2011 in regards to case [REDACTED]. Reference is also made to April 27, 2011 email communication from SSA [REDACTED] Counterterrorism [REDACTED] in regards to Inspire Magazine and case [REDACTED].

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Details: (~~S//REL~~) [REDACTED]

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(U) Background on Inspire

(U//~~FOUO~~) Inspire is an English-language online jihadist magazine of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) which is published by the Al-Malahim Establishment for Media Production. Articles within Inspire Magazine and "44 Ways to Support Jihad" are strongly biased against the United States and its interests and thus should be characterized as propaganda aimed in considerable part to recruit Western readers to the AQAP network and its causes.

(U) Background on BitTorrent Networks

(U) BitTorrent is a peer-to-peer file sharing protocol used for distributing large amounts of data. The BitTorrent protocol can distribute a large file without a heavy load on the source computer and network. Rather than downloading a file from a single source, the BitTorrent protocol allows users to join a "swarm" of hosts to download and upload from each other simultaneously. The protocol works as an alternative method to distribute data and can work over networks with low bandwidth so even small computers, like mobile phones, are able to distribute files to many recipients.

(U) A user who wants to upload a file first creates a small torrent descriptor file that he distributes by conventional means (web, email, etc.). He then makes the file itself available through a BitTorrent node acting as a seed. Those with the torrent descriptor file can give it to their own BitTorrent nodes

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To: [REDACTED] From: [REDACTED]
Re: (S//~~REL~~) [REDACTED] 04/29/2011

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which, acting as peers or leechers, download it by connecting to the seed and/or other peers.

(U) The file being distributed is divided into segments called pieces. As each peer receives a new piece of the file it becomes a source of that piece to other peers, relieving the seed from having to send a copy to every peer. With BitTorrent, the task of distributing the file is shared by those who want it; it is entirely possible for the seed to send only a single copy of the file itself to an unlimited number of peers.

(U) When a peer completely downloads a file, it becomes an additional seed. This eventual shift from peers to seeders determines the overall "health" of the file (as determined by the number of times a file is available in its complete form).

(U) This distributed nature of BitTorrent leads to a flood like spreading of a file throughout peers. As more peers join the swarm, the likelihood of a successful download increases. Relative to standard Internet hosting, this provides a significant reduction in the original distributor's hardware and bandwidth resource costs. It also provides redundancy against system problems, reduces dependence on the original distributor and provides a source for the file which is generally temporary and therefore harder to trace than when provided by the enduring availability of a host in standard file distribution techniques.

(U) Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BitTorrent_\(protocol\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BitTorrent_(protocol))

(U) See also: "BitTorrent Explained" at <http://www.wtata.com/faq/>

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To:

From:

04/29/2011

Re: (S//REL)

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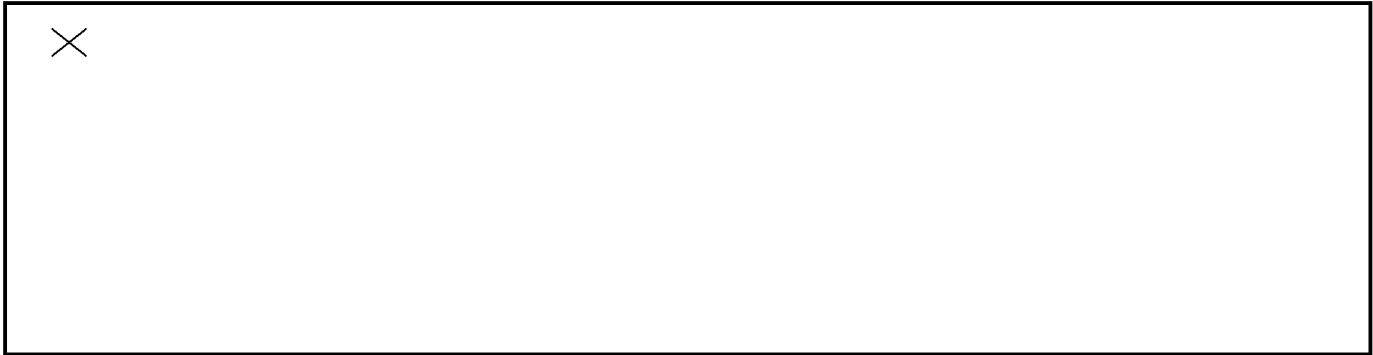
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~~SECRET//REL IDO~~

To: [REDACTED] From: [REDACTED]
(U) Re: (~~S~~//~~REL~~) [REDACTED] 04/29/2011

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~~SECRET//RELID~~O

To: [REDACTED] From: [REDACTED]
(U) Re: ~~(S//REL)~~ [REDACTED], 04/29/2011

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LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

[REDACTED]

AT

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] (S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT

[REDACTED]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 4: (Info)

CYBER

AT

[REDACTED]

(U) Read and clear.

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~~SECRET//RELID~~O

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To: [REDACTED] From: [REDACTED]
(U) Re: ~~(S//REL)~~ [REDACTED] 04/29/2011

b3
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Set Lead 5: (Info)

[REDACTED]

AT [REDACTED]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 6: (Info)

[REDACTED]

AT [REDACTED]

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//RELIDO~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(S) b1
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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 03/15/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]
SSA [redacted]
[redacted]

b6
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Attn: [redacted]
SSA [redacted]
IA [redacted]
SOS [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]
A/SSA [redacted]

Attn: LEGAT [redacted]

Attn: LEGAT [redacted]

Attn: LEGAT [redacted]

From: [redacted]

Contact: [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

Approved By: [redacted]
Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (S)
(U) (S)
(S)

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b7E

Title: (S)

[redacted] (S)

(U) (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT-GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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[redacted]

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~

(U) ~~(S)~~ ASSESSMENTS
CT-SUNNI EXTREMISM-MIDDLE EAST

Reference: (S)

[Redacted]

(S)

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Synopsis: (S//~~NR~~)

[Redacted]

(S)

(U)

~~Derived from : FBI NSISCG-20090615~~
~~Declassify On: 20360315~~

Administrative: (S)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(S)

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Details: (S//~~NR~~)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(S)

X

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT

(U)

Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT

(U)

Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

AT

(U)

Read and clear.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

AT

(U)

LEGAT: Read and clear.

Set Lead 5: (Info)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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~~SECRET~~

AT [REDACTED]

b7E

(U) LEGAT: Read and clear.

Set Lead 6: (Info)



AT [REDACTED]

(U) LEGAT: Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [REDACTED]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-18-2019

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[REDACTED] (OGA)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b6
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From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 12:34 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b1
(S) b3
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From: [REDACTED] (OGA)
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 9:09 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]

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~~SECRET//OC/NF~~

[REDACTED]

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b7C

Thanks

[REDACTED]

b6
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~~SECRET//OC/NF~~ (U)

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~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

FBI INFO.

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]

REASON: 1.4 (C)

DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036

DATE: 04-18-2019

b6

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b6

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b7E

[REDACTED] (FBI)

From:

Sent:

To:

Cc:

[REDACTED] (FBI)

Wednesday, May 04, 2011 4:06 PM

Subject:

feedback for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] here is some more feedback for [REDACTED]

b1

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Best,

Team Khan

b7E

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 04/18/2011 [REDACTED]

To: Charlotte

Attn: SA [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Contact: IOA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED] (Pending) [REDACTED]

(U) Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN;
CT-GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

~~Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20090615~~
~~Declassify On: 20360418~~

(U) [REDACTED] (USPER)

Reference: (U) [REDACTED]

Details: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

(U) Lead 2 in [REDACTED] considered covered by [REDACTED]

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~b6
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b7E

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b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Charlotte From: [REDACTED]
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 04/18/2011

b3
b7E

Accomplishment Information:

Number: 1
Type: [REDACTED]
ITU: [REDACTED] (S)
Claimed By:
SSN: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED]
Squad: [REDACTED]

b1
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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Charlotte From: [REDACTED]
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 04/18/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

(U) For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/02/2011

To: [REDACTED]

Attn: SSA [REDACTED]

SA [REDACTED]

SA [REDACTED]

Attn: SSA [REDACTED]

Attn: [REDACTED]

Attn: RIDS/CLASSIFICATION UNIT

b6
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b7E

Charlotte
General Counsel
Records Management

From: Counterterrorism [REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (X) [REDACTED] (S)

Title: (S) [REDACTED] (S)

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SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (U) To document that Assistant Director Counterterrorism Division Mark F. Giuliano, an Original Classification Authority, on 22 April 2011, verbally authorized declassification of the results of an interview, [REDACTED] conducted by FBI Charlotte Division on 16 October 2009 for the purpose of [REDACTED]

b3
b7E
b7A

[REDACTED] in the above referenced matter; provides OCA-approved declassification request to Records Management for execution. CTD AD verbal authority was granted on 22 April 2011.

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20090615~~

~~SECRET~~

b3
b7E
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b7C

2942

~~SECRET~~

To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism
(S) Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 05/02/2011

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~~Declassify On: 20360502~~

(U)

b7E

(U) Details: ~~(S)~~ ~~(NF)~~ [redacted] United States
Attorney's Office in coordination with [redacted] and FBI
Headquarters Counterterrorism Division drafted [redacted]

b7E
b7A

[redacted] subject Samir
Khan.

(U) ~~(S)~~ ~~(NF)~~ On Friday 22 April 2011 at approximately
6:15pm, CTD AD Mark F. Giuliano, an Original Classification
Authority, verbally provided authority to declassifv the
paragraph below from the document [redacted] for
investigative use:

b3
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(U)

~~(S)~~

(U) Charlotte Division concurred with this
declassification for the purpose of including the information in
[redacted] and any potential subsequent
criminal proceedings.

b7E
b7A

(U) Consistent with Executive Order 12958, Original
Classification Authorities in the FBI have a responsibility to

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism

Re: (S) (U) [redacted] 05/02/2011

b1
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properly protect classified information. Before information may be declassified, the Field Office and Substantive Unit at Headquarters must:

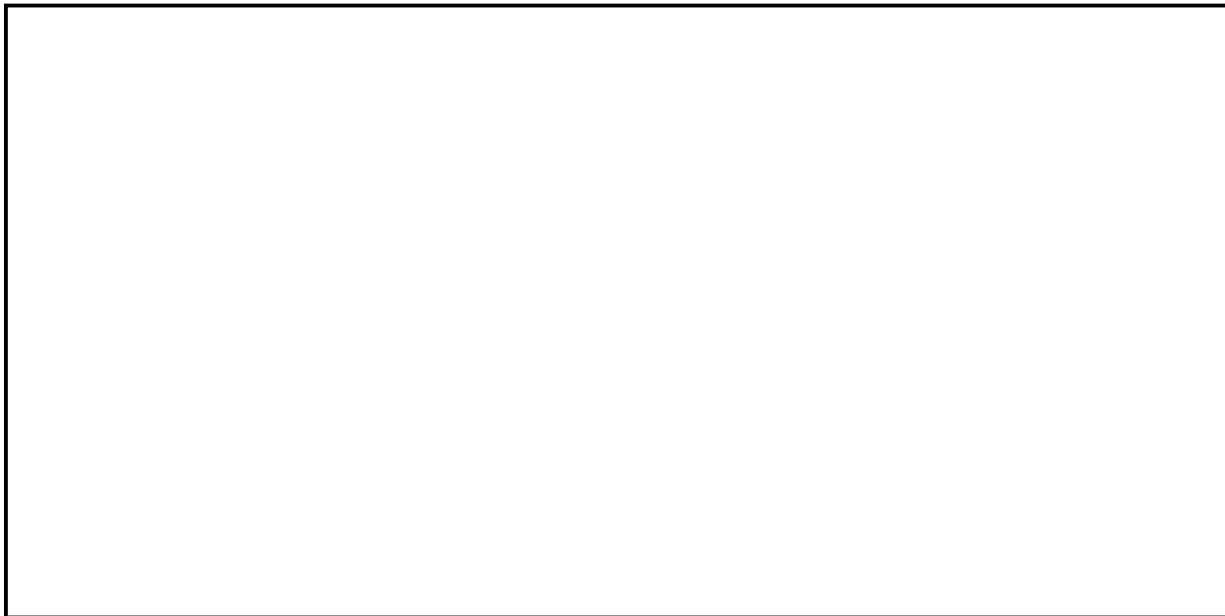
b7E



(U) FBI Charlotte, [redacted]

[redacted] have reviewed the information to be declassified and concluded that declassification:

b7E



(U) FBI Charlotte, [redacted] will follow all administrative procedures for physical marking of declassified material.

(U) Based upon the above justification CTD AD Mark F. Giuliano, an Original Classification Authority, verbally approved declassification of the above outlined material for use in [redacted] [redacted] described above.

b7E
b7A

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism

(S) Re: (S) [redacted] 05/02/2011

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(U) ~~(S/AF)~~ Records Management Division/Classification Unit is requested to review the enclosed document and manually mark as unclassified.

(U) The Classification Unit is requested to notify FBI Charlotte and [redacted], via EC, when marking has been completed. Please refer to captioned investigation.

b7E

(U) Any questions or concerns regarding the above request should be submitted to [redacted] ASC [redacted] or SA [redacted]

b6
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b7E

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(S) To: [redacted] From: Counterterrorism
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/02/2011

b1
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b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

GENERAL COUNSEL

AT [redacted]

b7E

(U) [redacted]

Read and clear.

Set Lead 2: (Action)

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

AT [redacted]

b7E

(U) (X) Records Management Division/Classification Unit is requested to review the enclosed document and manually mark as unclassified and forward final marked document to FBI Charlotte.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-18-2019

b6
b7C

[redacted] (FBI)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b6
b7C
b7E

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 6:43 PM
To: [redacted]

Cc:
Subject: RE: samir khan ref's

Thanks [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

This is very interesting and will take some digesting. Ironically [redacted] called me just before I received this.

b1
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b7E
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b7D

Thanks,

SA [redacted]
[redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 4:54 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]

b6
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b3
b7E

COMPOSITE
INFORMATION FROM [redacted]
[redacted]

1

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

[redacted] (FBI)

Subject: RE: samir khan ref's

b7E

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b7C
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(S)

b6
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STE:
NSTS

From: [redacted] (FBI)

Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 4:43 PM

To: [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: RE: samir khan ref's

b6
b7C
b7E

Thanks [redacted]. I'm forwarding to [redacted] to make sure that they have seen this and are engaged.

b6
b7C
b7E

~~SECRET~~

~~NOFORN/GRCON~~

A/UC [redacted]

Desk: [redacted]

NSTS: 93-14739

b6
b7C
b7E

~~SECRET~~

~~NOFORN/GRCON~~

From: [redacted] (FBI)

Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 3:31 PM

To: [redacted]

Subject: FW: samir khan ref's

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 2:36 PM
To: [redacted] (FBI)
Subject: samir khan ref's

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b7C

Here's the references to Samir Khan

[redacted]

b1
(S) b3
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b7C
b7D

[redacted]
Intelligence Analyst
Counterterrorism Division

b6
b7C
b7E

[redacted]

All content within this email including attachments and email threads carry the classification controls ~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ even when not specified in the classification line and unless otherwise noted.

[redacted]

b1
(S) b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-18-2019

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[REDACTED] (FBI)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Wednesday, January 12, 2011 11:32 AM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: [REDACTED] (S)

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b6
b7C
b7D

SSA [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (STE)
[REDACTED] NSTS

b6
b7C
b7E

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2011 10:15 AM
To: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] (S)

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See below - [REDACTED] (S)

b1
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SSA [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
desk/STE: [REDACTED]
cell: [REDACTED]
NSTS [REDACTED]

b6
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b7E

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2011 8:40 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] (S)

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Fysa, brief tic on inspire magazine

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Friday, January 07, 2011 1:55 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

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b7C
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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(S)

Subject: [REDACTED]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~

(S)

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b7D
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b7C

Thanks

b6
b7C
b7E

SSA [REDACTED]
Counterterrorism [REDACTED]
O: [REDACTED]
STE: [REDACTED]
C: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~

~~Derived from: FBI NSISCG 20090615~~

~~Declassify on: 25X1-human~~

~~SECRET~~



UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

b3
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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-18-2019 BY [redacted] NSICG

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b6
b7C

FBI WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE SEEKING INFORMATION

This individual is an alleged [redacted] who was located in [redacted] in
late 2010. His current whereabouts are unknown.

b6
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**IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS PERSON
PLEASE CONTACT SA [redacted]**

**OFFICE
CELL -**

b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 05/12/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: CDC [REDACTED]

SA [REDACTED]

SIOS [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

[REDACTED]

Counterterrorism

Attn: SA [REDACTED]

Attn: SSA [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U)

(U)

(U)

(Pending)

(Pending)

(Pending) (S)

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b7A

Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

(S)

(S)

(S)

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b7C

Synopsis: (S)

(S)

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301~~

~~Declassify On: 05/05/2036~~

Details:

OVERVIEW

(S)

(S)

b1
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~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/12/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

[REDACTED]

AT

[REDACTED]

b1
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[REDACTED]

(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT

[REDACTED]

b7E

(U) For information.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT
FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

Congressional Testimony

b6
b7C

TERRORIST THREAT TO THE U.S. HOMELAND – AL-QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA (AQAP)

Testimony by **Dr. Christopher Boucek**
Associate, Middle East Program
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

House Committee on Homeland Security
Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence
Washington, D.C.
March 2, 2011

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Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for inviting me here today.

Yemen is facing an unprecedented confluence of crises, the combination of which threatens to overwhelm the beleaguered Yemeni government. The country's problems include international terrorism, violent extremism, religious and tribal conflict, separatism, and transnational smuggling. Attempts to build effective national governance are frustrated by porous borders, a heavily armed population, and a historical absence of much central government control. More than 3 million barrels of oil pass the country's coast every day, through treacherous waters where Islamist terrorists and Somali pirates have staged several successful maritime attacks, threatening to disrupt international commerce and the flow of vital hydrocarbons. These challenges not only endanger Yemen's stability and regional security, but they also threaten American domestic security.

Interrelated economic, demographic, and domestic security challenges are converging to threaten the stability of Yemen. At the heart of the country's problems is a looming economic crisis. Yemen's oil reserves are fast running out, with few viable options for a sustainable post-oil economy. Yemen is the poorest country in the Arab world, with most people surviving on less than one dollar per day. Its population growth rate, which exceeds 3 percent per year, is among the world's highest. The government has been unable to provide adequate educational or other public services for the rapidly expanding population, more than two-thirds of which is under the age of 24, and illiteracy stands at over 50 percent (and close to 70 percent for women). The faltering economy and poorly prepared workforce have pushed unemployment to almost 40 percent. The country's dire economic circumstances will soon limit the government's ability to deliver the funds needed to hold the country together. The population is expected to double to 40 million over the next two decades, by which time Yemen will no longer be an oil producer, and its water resources will be severely diminished. This is currently the greatest source of violence in the country; an estimated 80 percent of violence in Yemen is about access to water. A rapidly expanding and increasingly poorer population places unbearable pressure on the government's ability to provide basic services. Domestic security is endangered by Islamist terrorism, magnified by a resurgent al-Qaeda organization, an armed insurrection in the North, and an increasingly active secessionist movement in the South.

The recent wave of unrest rocking the Middle East has not spared Yemen. Popular protests in Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, and other cities against the government of President Ali Abdullah Saleh have been ongoing since January. This latest challenge has mobilized a segment of the population that has thus far not presented much challenge to the Yemeni government. In an attempt to short-circuit the protest movement, the government announced a series of economic concessions. It sought to maintain the allegiance of the military and security forces by announcing pay raises and even access to free food and gas. It addressed the concerns of civil servants by putting into immediate effect salary increases for the lowest paid employees originally scheduled for October 2011. It cut the national income tax by half and reportedly increased some subsidies and introduced new price controls. The government also waved university tuition fees for currently enrolled students and announced a scheme to help new university graduates find employment. Finally, it extended social welfare assistance to an additional half-million families.

When economic measures failed to quell the discontent, President Saleh turned to political concessions. In a speech to the parliament and shura council on February 2, he announced that he would not stand for re-election in 2013 and that his eldest son and presumed heir, General Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, commander of the Republican Guard, would also not run for president. He "froze" the implementation of a controversial constitutional amendment eliminating term limits on the presidency. Saleh also stated that regional governors would now be directly elected rather than indirectly elected by local councils, a little noticed but important change. And finally, he called for the formation of a national unity government and the re-launching of the stalled national dialogue process, and postponed parliamentary elections scheduled for this April to allow time to properly prepare.

Although the regime nominally met almost all of its demands, the opposition promptly rejected the concessions, not trusting the president to keep his promises. Saleh has previously pledged not to seek re-election, but has gone back on his word numerous times in the past.

Yemen's challenges are compounded by corruption, severe governance deficiencies, and an absence of central government control in much of the country, as well as by the pending transition in political leadership. While Saleh announced last month that he would not stand for re-election, he has no obvious successor. The post-Saleh government will be severely strained by a combination of reduced revenue, diminished state capacity, and three ongoing conflicts including the seven year old civil war in the North against the Houthi rebels, an increasingly violent secessionist movement in the South, and a resurgent al-Qaeda organization.

The deteriorating security situation in Yemen is not purely an international issue. Greater instability in Yemen is a domestic American security issue, as evidenced by the emergence of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

Since its creation in January 2009, the Yemen-based al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has eclipsed 'core al-Qaeda' as the primary terrorist threat to U.S. national security. Since last year I have asserted that AQAP has emerged as the organization most likely to kill American nationals and to attack U.S. interests. In an address at the Carnegie Endowment last December, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John Brennan termed AQAP "the most operationally active node of the al-Qaida network." In testimony last month, National Counterterrorism Center Director Michael Leiter referred to AQAP as the most significant risk to the U.S. homeland.

AQAP has rapidly evolved into an increasingly lethal and agile organization, with a proven track record of mounting operations within Yemen, regionally, and internationally. AQAP thrives on Yemen's internal disarray. The government's inability to control territory provides the space al-Qaeda craves, using poverty and legitimate grievances against a repressive domestic regime to win support.

AQAP learned the lessons of the failed al-Qaeda campaign in Saudi Arabia. It avoids targeting Yemeni civilians, has a highly sophisticated media apparatus, and is cautious not to

repeat the same mistakes made in the kingdom. More worrisome, when initial operations have been unsuccessful, AQAP has re-attacked the same target, such as the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a (attacked twice in 2009), Saudi Prince Muhammad bin Nayef (who has survived four reported assassination attempts by AQAP), and British diplomatic targets in Sana'a (attacked twice in 2010). This should serve as a very dire warning when we consider AQAP's two attempted attacks so far against U.S. aviation targets.

The organization has a very fast learning curve, quickly adjusts and improvises, and is very adept at exploiting opportunities. AQAP has been clear in stating its planned objectives, and it has repeatedly delivered on its threats. These concerns are heightened by the presence of Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-Awlaqi in Yemen and his alleged role in inciting English-speaking foreigners to engage in violence and militancy. Moreover, many of the recent alleged terrorist plots and plans in the United States appear to be linked to Yemen, AQAP, and Awlaqi.

The attempted bombing of Northwest Flight 235 over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009 marked the first time since the September 11th attacks that al-Qaeda had successfully engaged a domestic American target. This attack was further noteworthy because the plot did not originate in South Asia with the al-Qaeda Senior Leadership—it came from Yemen. The Christmas Day attack was followed some ten months later when AQAP again targeted U.S. aviation assets with the attempted delivery of explosives concealed as cargo packages mailed from Yemen. The worst case scenario was narrowly avoided in both these cases, but not by successful proactive counter-terrorism efforts. We cannot count on our luck continuing.

The 2009 Christmas Day attack demonstrated an early desire to attack on American soil. The October 2010 parcel bomb plot is just the latest evidence that AQAP is now the greatest single terrorist threat to the security of the U.S.—a greater danger even than al-Qaeda's central leadership.

AQAP's growing ambitions and reach have also seen more successful operations in Yemen itself. In 2010 there were more than 50 AQAP attacks in Yemen. In the first two months of 2011 there have been over 10 attacks. AQAP has targeted energy infrastructure, foreigners, and domestic security forces. It has also successfully cast U.S. air strikes and military support—including cruise missile strikes in December 2009—as examples of American aggression.

We should be clear that there is much that we do not know about AQAP. While we may want to view AQAP as a formal organization with an established hierarchy, other analysts have also noted that it is doubtful that killing or capturing the group's top leaders will eliminate Yemen's al-Qaeda problem. It would likely degrade AQAP's ability to mount operations; however, the grievances that fuel militancy in Yemen would also likely remain.

I would suggest that there are likely several trends within AQAP. First, the Yemenis active in the organization seem to be focused primarily on a local agenda. Second, the Saudis active in the group are generally less focused on local Yemeni politics and more intent upon returning to the kingdom to strike at the Saudi government. The third trend is that foreign nationals—as well as some Yemenis and Saudis—are focusing primarily on international and Western targets. I would place within this last grouping the Westerners active with AQAP—including

Americans—as well as Anwar al-Awlaqi. These distinctions are not hard and fast, and there is very likely movement and overlap between them.

Media Usage

The group is very skilled at amplifying its message, as seen by the debut of the AQAP-affiliated English-language magazine *Inspire* calling for attacks on the U.S. Its powers of communication, along with growing military successes, have begun to attract increasing numbers of foreign terrorists into Yemen. The organization has developed a very sophisticated media operation, in both Arabic and English. Through the English-language magazine *Inspire*, now in its fourth issue, the organization is able to reach a much broader audience. In addition, just about the time that *Inspire* was first released in July 2010, a new YouTube channel appeared featuring many of AQAP's videos subtitled into English. While the channel is no longer available, the material remains online, reposted by other users. Both of these developments demonstrate how AQAP has dramatically increased the size of its potential audience. No longer does one need Arabic or particular know-how to navigate jihadi web forums. Non-Arabic speakers can now access this material using Google and YouTube.

Yemen's Changing Role

Over the years, Yemen had been a place to train and prepare for jihad or to rest between campaigns. It is now being transformed into an actual theater of jihad. As other observers have noted, Yemen is being portrayed by AQAP as a place where it is legitimate to engage in jihad. In this portrayal, aspiring militants can resist American aggression and fight an illegitimate government in Yemen. AQAP has gone on to further recast Yemen as a “source of inspiration” for potential extremists located overseas. The organization has noted in *Inspire* that volunteers can do greater damage at home, without needing to travel abroad.

In conclusion, AQAP has quickly eclipsed core al-Qaeda as the most immediate terrorist threat to U.S. persons and interests. While the al-Qaeda Senior Leadership may still have the ambition to launch spectacular attacks against the United States, AQAP has emerged as the more imminent threat. This is exacerbated by the concern that AQAP has had success in recruiting Westerners, including converts, who do not fit traditional terrorist profiles. It will be more difficult to identify and disrupt plots led by these individuals. Very clearly Yemen's problems are not staying in Yemen and AQAP poses a grave and growing threat to American domestic security.

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [redacted]

REASON: 1.4 (C)

DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036

DATE: 04-18-2019

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[redacted] (FBI)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2011 5:13 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: [redacted] (§)

b1
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b6
b7C

SSA [redacted]
[redacted] Desk
[redacted] NSTS

b6
b7C
b7E

From: [redacted] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2011 3:52 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: (§) [redacted]

b1
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b7E
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b7C

[redacted] I have some follow up questions...

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b6
b7C

Thanks!

SA [redacted]
[redacted]

b6
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b3
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b7C

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

b1
(S) b3
b7E

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/18/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
IA [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]
SA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

TFO [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SA [redacted]

From: [redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U)

(U)
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(U)
(U)
(U)

(S)

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b7C

Title: (S)

(S)

(U) (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

(S)

(S)

(S)

(S)

b1
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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

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b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

b1
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To: Charlotte From: [redacted]

(S)

(S) Re: (U) [redacted] 05/18/2011

Synopsis: (U) [redacted]

(S)

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b7E

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360517~~

(U)

Administrative: [redacted]

(S)

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Details: (S) [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~

(S)

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b7E

To: Charlotte From:

(S)

Re:

(X)

05/18/2011

(S)

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b6
b7C

X

~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~

(S)

b7A

b1
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b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E

To: Charlotte From: [redacted]

(S) Re: (X) [redacted] 05/18/2011

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Info)

[redacted]
AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[redacted]
AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]
AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/17/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: TFO
SA

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte

Contact: SOS

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (S)
(U)

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b7C

Title: (S)

(U) (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

Synopsis: (S//NF)

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b7E
b6
b7C

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360517

Reference: (S)

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

Details: (S//NF)

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
(S) Re: (S) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b1
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b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN/ORCON~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/17/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

IA

SSA

SA

TFO

b6
b7C
b7E

Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Contact: SOS

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U)

(X)

(S)

b1
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b7E
b7A

(U) Title: (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(X)

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

(U) Synopsis: (S//NF) A summary of Samir Khan's YouTube pages, AbuRisaas, RevolutionThabaat, and Mujahidfesabeelillah, and a list of his YouTube associates.

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301

Declassify On: 20360517

(U) Details: (S//NF) Prior to his departure for Yemen in October 2009, Khan maintained three known YouTube channels (aka profiles) under the monikers AbuRisaas and RevolutionThabaat and Mujahidfesabeelillah. It was requested that [redacted] examine screen shots and the open source profiles to address individuals of concern and to summarize Khan's activities on the pages.

b7E

(U) Writer accessed Khan's publicly available YouTube channels on Friday, April 15, 2011. The following summary and

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b3
b7E

persons of interest are derived from the information available at the time and from screen shots of the profile pages as of August 2010.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: ABURISAAS

Profile User Information

(U) Date Viewed: April 15, 2011
Channel Views: 4378
Upload Views: 49711
Age: 36
Join Date: December 28, 2008
Last Visit: 1 year ago
Subscribers: 55
Country: Albania

(U) Date Viewed: August 2010
Channel Views: 3394
Upload Views: 33328
Age: 35
Join Date: December 28, 2008
Last Visit: 9 months ago
Subscribers: 49
Country: Albania

Users who Commented on AbuRisaas' Channel

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ The following seven users posted comments on the publicly available YouTube channel for AbuRisaas. [REDACTED]

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(S)

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b3
b7E

Users who are YouTube "Friends" with AbuRisaas

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ The following 10 individuals are associated with AbuRisaas as YouTube "friends."



(S)

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b7E
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b7C
b7A

Users who are Subscribers to AbuRisaas' Channel

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ The following 52 associates are "subscribers" or followers of AbuRisaas' YouTube channel. [NOTE: The YouTube channel displays a count of 55 subscribers, but only 52 were viewable.]



(S)

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

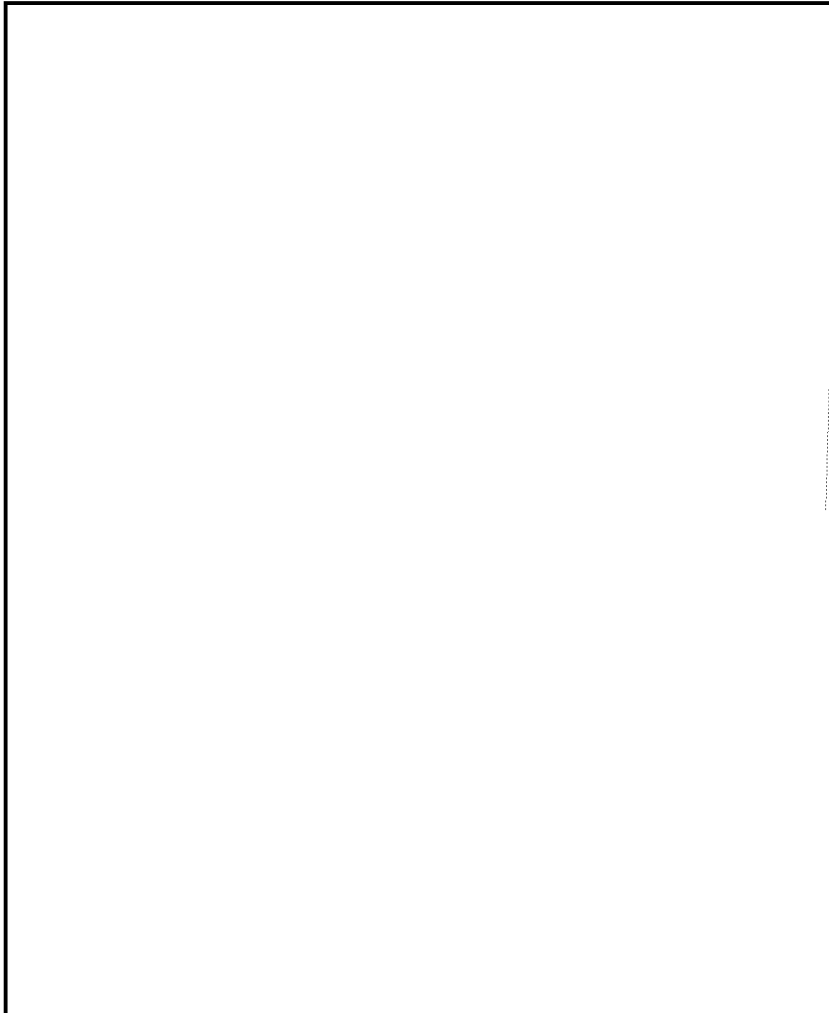
~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b3
b7E

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b7E
b6
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b7A



(S)

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: REVOLUTIONTHABAAT

Profile User Information

(U) Date Viewed: April 15, 2011
Channel Views: 175
Upload Views: 313
Age: 42
Join Date: March 6, 2009
Last Visit: 2 years ago
Subscribers: 9
Country: Taiwan

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b3
b7E

(U) Date Viewed: August 2010
Channel Views: 126
Upload Views: 313
Age: 41
Join Date: March 6, 2009
Last Visit: 1 year ago
Subscribers: 9
Country: Taiwan

Users who Commented on RevolutionThabaat's Channel

(U) The following one user posted a comment on the publicly available YouTube channel for RevolutionThabaat.

[REDACTED] (S)

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

Users who are YouTube "Friends" with RevolutionThabaat

(U) There are no "friends" associated with the RevolutionThabaat channel.

Users who are Subscribers to RevolutionThabaat's Channel

(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ The following nine associates are "subscribers" or followers of RevolutionThabaat's YouTube channel.

[REDACTED] (S)

b1
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b7A

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b3
b7E

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: MUJAHIDFESABEELILLAH - SUSPENDED

(U) According to Open Source research, this account was suspended on December 29, 2008; therefore, there are no associates nor activities to report.

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b7C

(S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) 05/17/2011



(S)

b3
b7E
b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/17/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [REDACTED]

b1
b3
b7E

(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/12/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U)

(S)

(S)

b1
b3
b7E

Title: (S)

SAMIR KHAN
CE - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

[redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

Synopsis: (U) To document contact with Charlotte liaison
contact on 04/13/2011 concerning captioned cases.

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360512~~

Details: (S)

[redacted] X

[redacted] (S)

b1
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~~SECRET~~

b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/12/2011

b3
b7E

b1
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b6
b7C

(S)

×

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/12/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~

(Rev. 05-01-2008)

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/24/2011

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (X)
(U)

(S)

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C
b7A

Title: (S)

(S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(U) Synopsis: (X) To document telephonic interview of [redacted]

b6
b7C

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360524~~

(U)

b7E

(U) Details: (X) On 05/18/2011, at approximately 12:40pm, the writer conducted a telephonic interview of [redacted] residence address, [redacted] cellular telephone number [redacted] provided the following information:

b6
b7C

(U)

(X)

b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/24/2011

b1
b3
b7E
b7A
b6
b7C

[redacted]

(U) (S) [redacted] stated that due to her religious beliefs, she would be uncomfortable meeting with FBI agents in person without [redacted]. While she agreed to answer further questions, she did not want to be contacted with great frequency, nor did she want to be involved with the FBI.

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b7C

b1
b3
(S) b7E
b6
b7C

[redacted]

♦♦

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-15-2019

b6
b7C

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

[REDACTED] (FBI)

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2011 10:29 AM
To: [REDACTED]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Cc:
Subject: FW: (S//NF) [REDACTED] ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ (S)

Importance: Low

Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

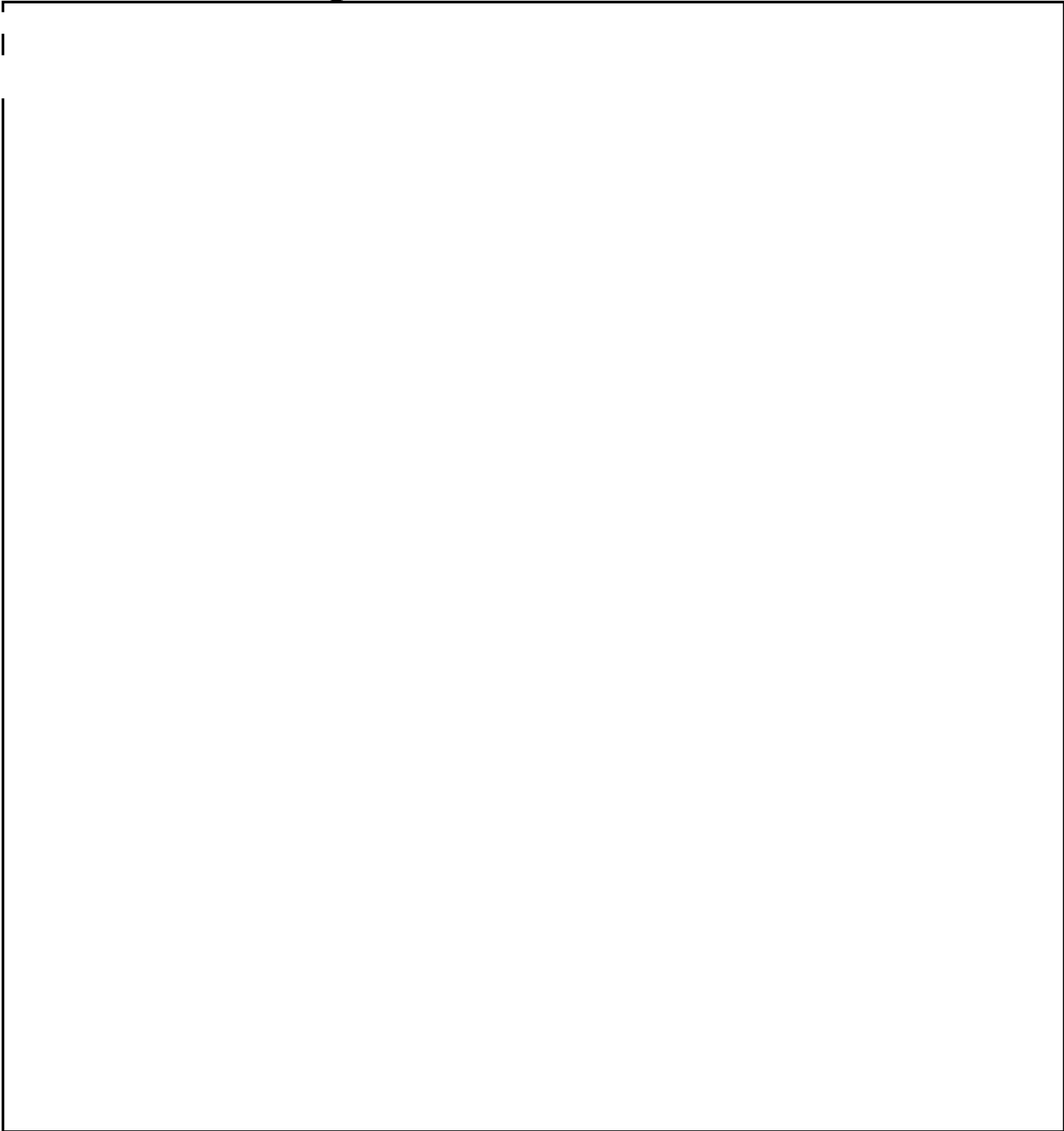
~~Classified By: FBI~~
~~Declassify On: 20360523~~
~~Derived From: FBI NSISC~~

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C
b7D

b3
b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C
b7D



=====

PROFILED DISSEMINEEES:

b3
b7E

[Redacted]
[Redacted] (CC)
ALL_MESSAGES [Redacted] (TO) [Redacted] (TO)
[Redacted] (TO) [Redacted] (TO)
[Redacted] (TO) [Redacted]
[Redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

~~SECRET~~

SIGNED BY:

[REDACTED]

b7E

[REDACTED]

*** VALIDATED

ENCRYPTED BY:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*** VALIDATED

MESSAGE TYPE: OTHERORG

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS:

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET//NOFORN//DB~~

=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-18-2019

b6
b7C

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

[REDACTED] (FBI)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

From: [REDACTED] (OGA)
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2011 11:33 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] (S)

~~SECRET//NF~~

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET//NF~~

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Saturday, May 21, 2011 7:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] (S)

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Saturday, May 21, 2011 7:53:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]

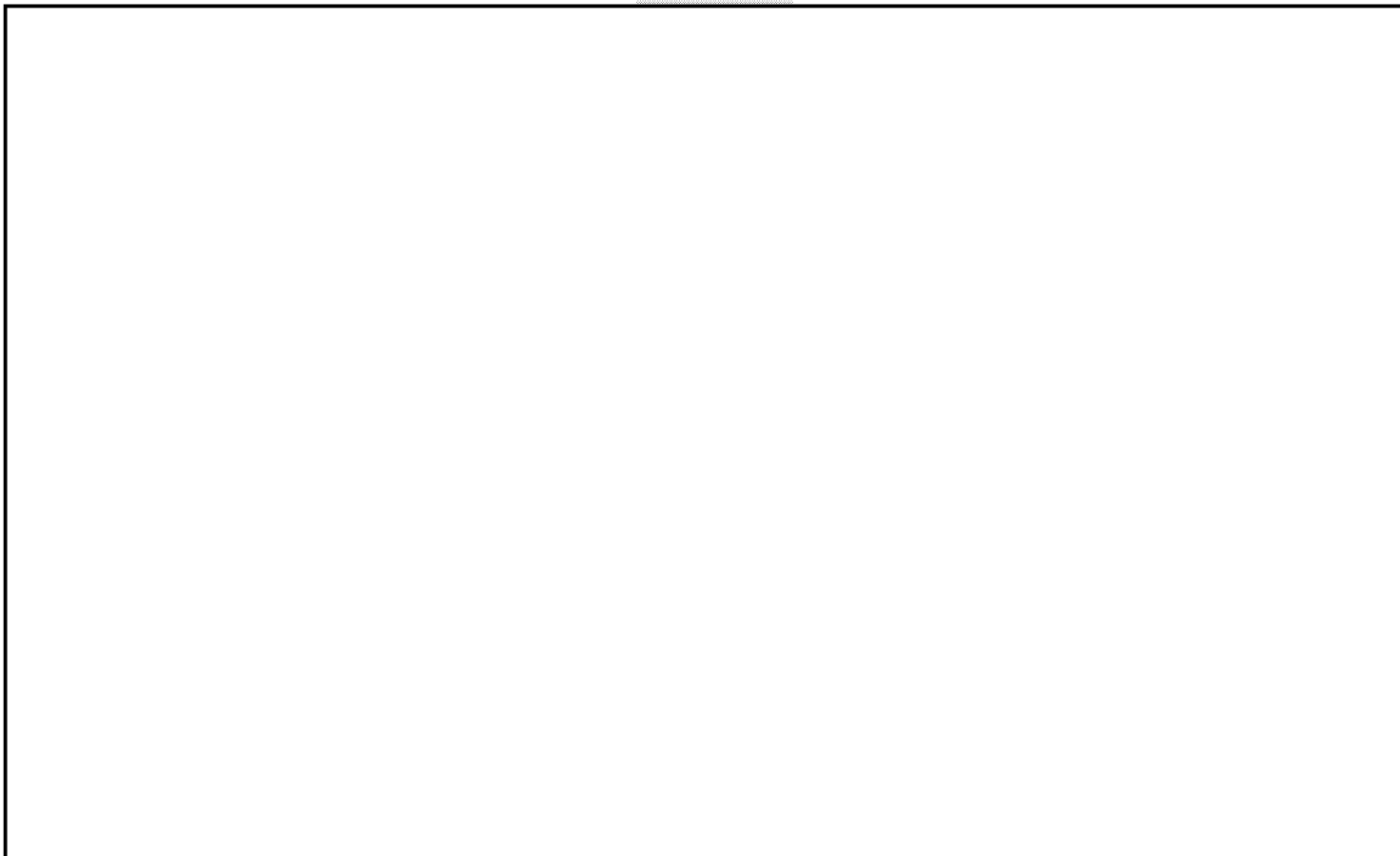
b1
b3
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b6
b7C

Subject: RE: [REDACTED] (S)
Auto forwarded by a Rule [REDACTED]

b3
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b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

b1
b3
b7E



SA [redacted]
Desk: [redacted] Cell: [redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 05/18/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: CDC [REDACTED]
SA [REDACTED]
SA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

[REDACTED]

Attn: SA [REDACTED]

Attn: [REDACTED]

Counterterrorism

Attn: SSA [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED]
(U)
(U)

(S)

b1
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b7E
b7A

Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

(S)

(S)

(S)

b1
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b7E
b6
b7C

Synopsis: (S) [REDACTED]

(S)
(S)

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 05/18/2036~~

Details:

OVERVIEW

[REDACTED]

(S)

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

~~SECRET~~

b3
b7E

~~SECRET~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 05/18/2011

b3
b7E

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

[REDACTED]

AT

[REDACTED]

(U) For information.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT

[REDACTED]

(U) For information.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[REDACTED]

AT

[REDACTED]

(U) ~~(S)~~ For information.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-23-2019

b6
b7C

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

[REDACTED] (FBI)

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, May 26, 2011 3:40 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Subject: (S) RE [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED

Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

[REDACTED] thank you for the information! This is good news.

To answer your questions: the subject [REDACTED] are all USPERs.

b6
b7C
b7E

As far as classification of the report, the way you describe how you will do the Lab report is how we do our ECs. Our ECs are all classified (because they have the case subject's name with the case ID number) but the portion markings of the paragraphs containing open source/unclassified material reflect that this information is unclassified.

Please proceed [REDACTED] we are anxious to see what results you find!

Thank you!

Best,

SA [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

From: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Sent: Thursday, May 26, 2011 3:14 PM
To: [REDACTED] (FBI)
Subject: (S) [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

Hi [REDACTED]

b1
b3
b7E
b6
b7C

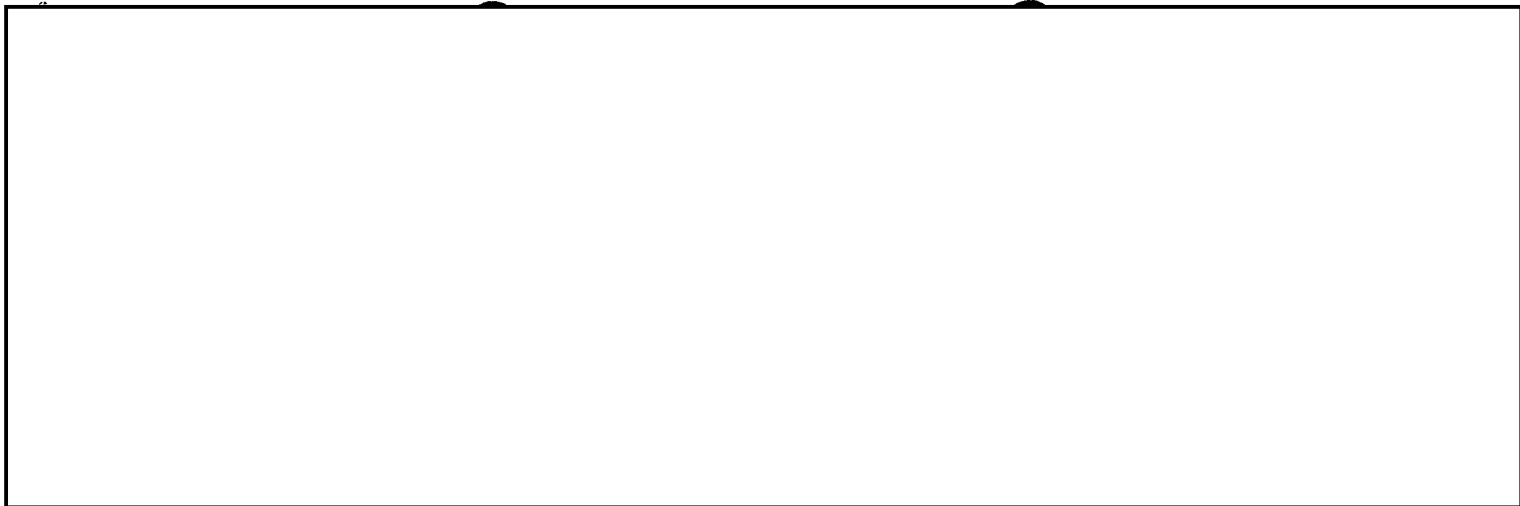
I tried giving you a call a bit ago but wasn't able to get through. Sorry for the delayed response but I believe we have some details sorted out on our end [REDACTED]

(S)

~~SECRET~~

b3
b7E
b6
b7C

b1
b3
b7E



Please let me know if you have any questions.
Thank you,

[Redacted]

Request Coordinator
Evidence Control Unit - Laboratory Division

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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=====
Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

=====
Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

(Rev. 05-01-2008)

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/25/2011

To: Counterterrorism
Charlotte

Attn:
Attn:

[Redacted]

b6
b7C
b7E

[Redacted]

Attn:

SA [Redacted]
SSA [Redacted]
SA [Redacted]

From: Counterterrorism

Contact: SSA [Redacted]

Approved By:

[Redacted]

Drafted By:

[Redacted]

(U) Case ID #: (S//NF)
(S//NF)
(U) (S//NF)

[Redacted] (S)

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b7A

(U) Title: (S//NF)
(S//NF)

[Redacted] (S)

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b6
b7C

(U) (S//NF)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (S//NF)

[Redacted] provides the Charlotte Division [Redacted] with information

[Redacted] (S)

b1
b3
b7E
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b7C

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20090615
Declassify On: 20360525

(U) Administrative: (S//NF) All [Redacted] information is for lead purposes only and is intended solely to provide background information to the recipients. The information may not be disseminated to any other agency or used as the basis for any United States legal process including, but not limited to: presentation to grand/petit juries or administrative bodies;

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~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

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b7C

[Redacted]

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism

(U) Re: ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] 05/25/2011

b3
b7E
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incorporation into affidavits or other documents relating to subpoenas, search, electronic surveillance, or arrest warrants; and/or evidence in criminal prosecutions without the prior authorization of [REDACTED] and the Department of Justice/Counterterrorism Section. [REDACTED]

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b7E

Enclosure(s): ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED]

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(S) b7E
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b7C

Details: ~~(S//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]

(S)

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism
(U) Re: ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] 05/25/2011

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[REDACTED]

(S)

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b7E
b6
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(U) Any questions regarding captioned investigation
should be addressed to [REDACTED] SA [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]
or [REDACTED] Program Manager, SSA [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]

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(U) For [REDACTED] related questions, please contact
[REDACTED] SSAs [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] at
[REDACTED]

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b7E

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

To: Counterterrorism From: Counterterrorism

(U) Re: ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] 05/25/2011

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) Read and Clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//ORCON/NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/18/2011

To: [redacted]

Charlotte

[redacted]

Attn: SA

SA
TFO

SA

SA

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte

Contact: SOS [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U)

(U)
(U)
(U)
(U)

[redacted] (S)

b1
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b7E

Title: ~~(S)~~ (U) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

(S)

(S)

[redacted] (S)

b1
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Synopsis: (S//~~NOFORN~~)

[redacted]

[redacted] (S)

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360518~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

To: [redacted] From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 05/18/2011

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 3: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/13/2012

To: Charlotte

Attn: SSA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7E

From: Charlotte [REDACTED]

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U) [REDACTED]
(U) [REDACTED]b3
b7E

Title: (U) OUTREACH/LIAISON

(U) ~~(S)~~ SAMIR KHAN**Synopsis:** (U) To document 1) outreach presentation to community group and 2) case presentation to [REDACTED]

b7E

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG 20080301 (U)~~
~~Declassify On: 20370613~~**Details:** (U) On 06/10/2012, writer was the guest speaker at Temple Beth El's Brotherhood meeting. Writer spoke about writer's career path, the FBI in general, the FBI in North Carolina, and the FBI's efforts on Shalom Park. Over 80 individuals were in attendance.(U) ~~(S)~~ On 06/12/2012, writer traveled to [REDACTED] at the request of [REDACTED] and provided a case briefing on the Samir Khan investigation. Approximately 40 agents, analysts, and TFOs were present.

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [REDACTED] 06/13/2012

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Accomplishment Information:

Number: 1

Type: [REDACTED]

ITU: [REDACTED]

Claimed By: [REDACTED]

SSN: [REDACTED]

Name: [REDACTED]

Squad: [REDACTED]

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Number: 1

Type: CONDUCT OPERATIONAL TRAINING/PRESENTATION #

Attendees/Recipients: 40

ITU: LIAISON WITHIN FBI.

Claimed By: [REDACTED]

SSN: [REDACTED]

Name: [REDACTED]

Squad: [REDACTED]

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOI/PA
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET
FOI/PA# 1193607-0

Total Deleted Page(s) = 243

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Page 86 ~ Referral/Consult;
Page 87 ~ Referral/Consult;
Page 88 ~ Referral/Consult;
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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/18/2011

To: Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: ~~(S)~~

(U)

~~(S)~~

Title: ~~(S)~~

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (U) To document request for enclosed

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360518

(U)

Reference: (U)

Enclosure(s): (U) Enclosed for the case file is a 1-A envelope
containing, One (1) CD-R with results.

Details: ~~(S)~~

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(X)~~ [REDACTED] 05/18/2011

(S) b1
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♦♦

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S) ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 05/17/2011

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To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

International Operations

Attn: [redacted]

[redacted]
Charlotte

Attn: Legat [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [redacted]

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Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U)

(U)

(U)

Title: (S)

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Synopsis: (S) Summary of captioned investigation and proposed
plan for interview of captioned subject.

Derived from: FBI NSISCG-20080615

Declassify On: 20360509

b7E

Enclosure(s): For [redacted] and Charlotte, one copy
each of [redacted]

Administrative: (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

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[redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~OFCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011 (S)

[redacted]

(S)

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Details:

[redacted]

[redacted]

(S)

BACKGROUND

[redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~OFCON~~ [redacted]

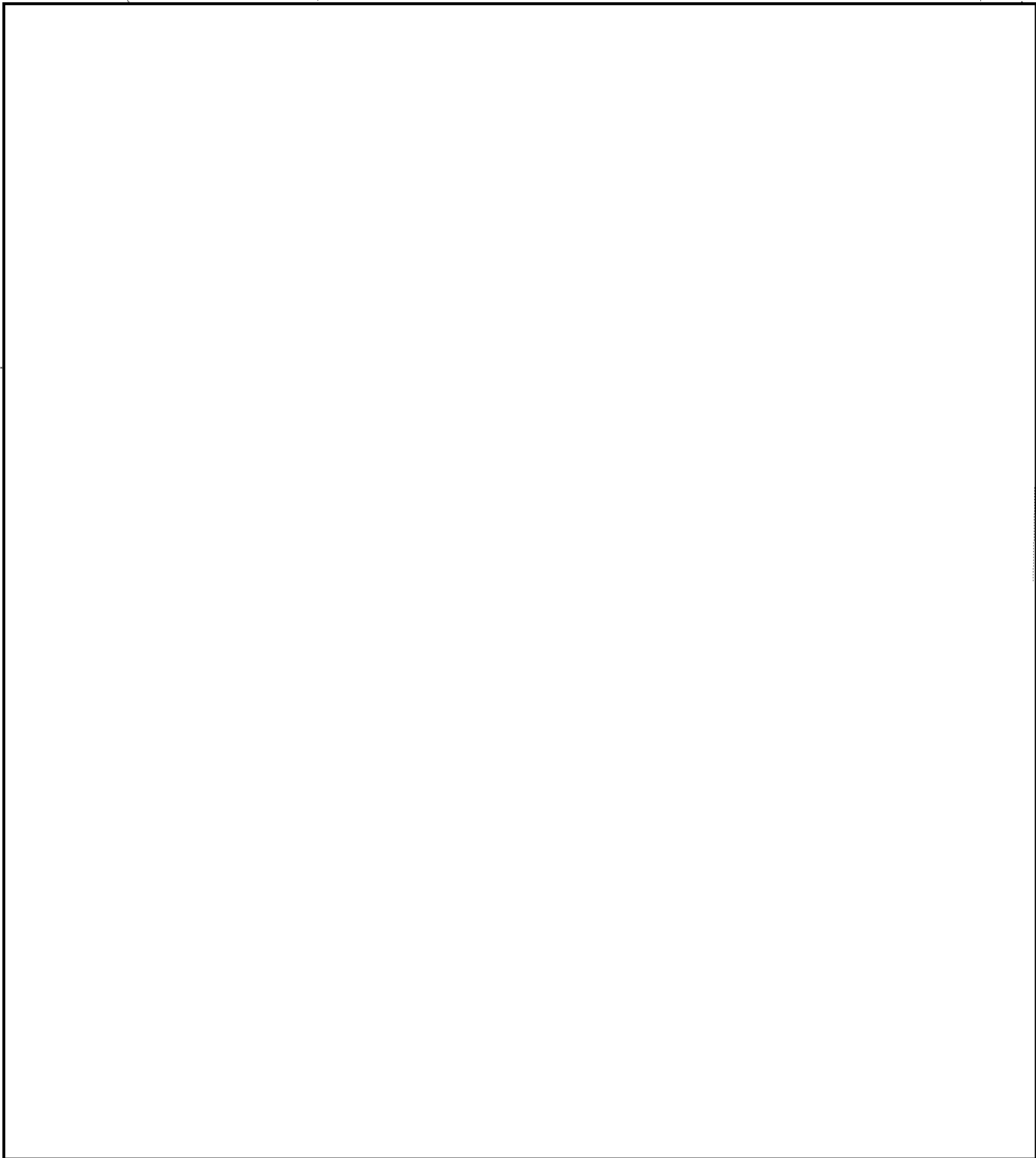
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 05/17/2011 (S)



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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011

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(S)

WORLD VIEW

(X//NF)

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(S)

INVESTIGATION TO DATE

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (S) [redacted] 05/17/2011 (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011 (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

(S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 05/17/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011

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[redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011

(S)

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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(U) [redacted] Request [redacted] consider Charlotte's
proposal to interview [redacted] as outlined above.

(S)

Set Lead 2: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(S)

Set Lead 3: (Action)

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b7E

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(S)

Set Lead 4: (Info)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

AT [redacted]

b1
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b7E

(U) [redacted]: Read and clear.

Set Lead 5: (Action)

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 05/17/2011 (S)

AT [redacted]

(X) For information and consideration. [redacted]

(S)

Set Lead 6: (Action)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(X) [redacted] SAs [redacted] are asked to provide

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/01/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: SA [redacted]

From: Charlotte
[redacted]

Contact: SOS [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U) [redacted]

Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (S//NF) [redacted] (S)

Derived From : ~~FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
Declassify On: ~~20360601~~

Administrative: (S) [redacted]
[redacted] (S)

Details: (S//NF) [redacted]
[redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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b7E

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 06/01/2011

(S)

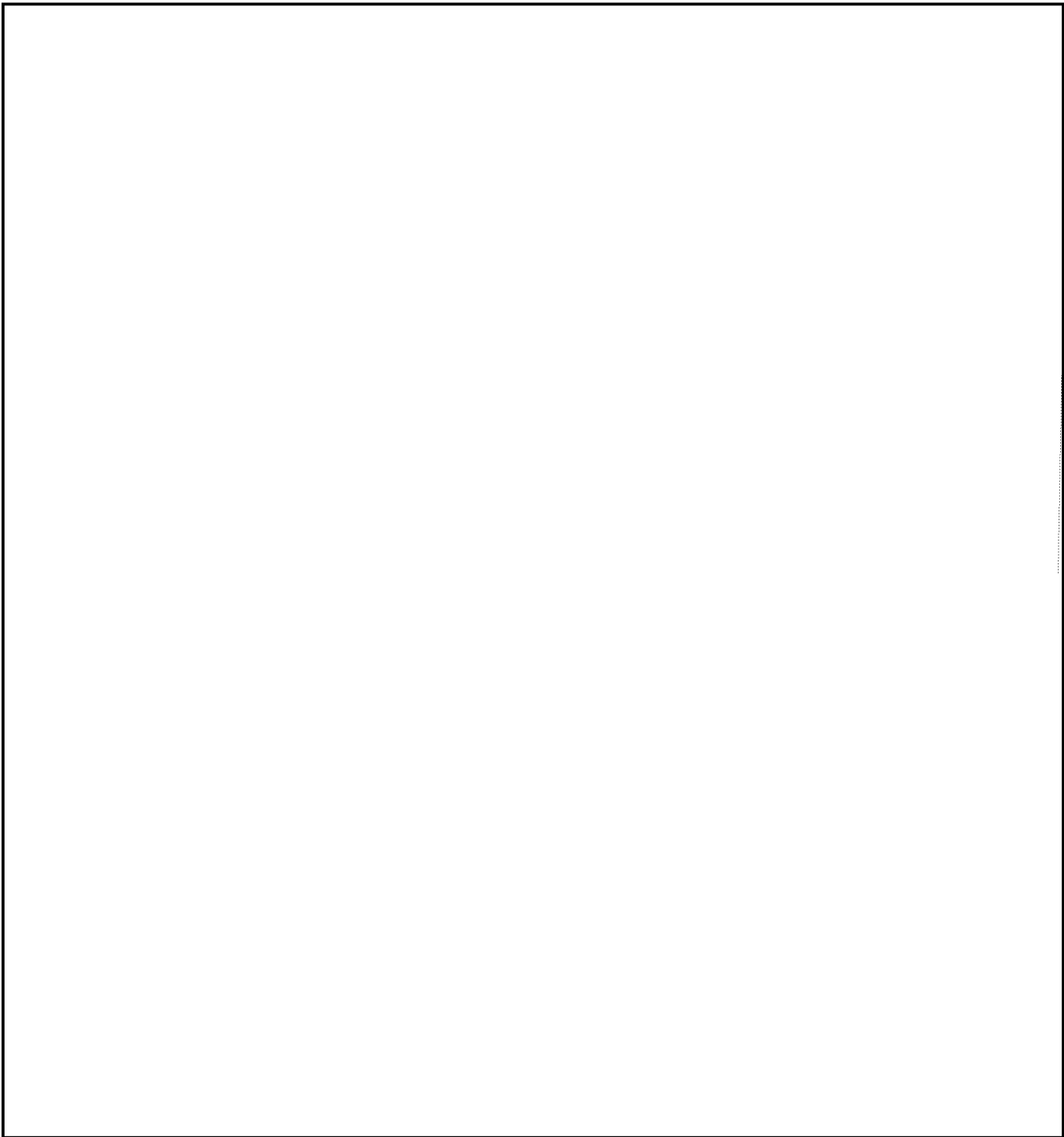
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/01/2011



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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/01/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/01/2011

[redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/01/2011

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) For information only.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-15-2019

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[REDACTED] (CE) (FBI)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 02, 2011 10:05 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

-- UNCLASSIFIED

(S)

Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

[REDACTED] - hope all is well. [REDACTED]

(S)

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 01, 2011 5:35 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]

-- UNCLASSIFIED

(S)

Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 06/06/2011

To: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

FE [redacted]

Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

Charlotte

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: SA [redacted]

[redacted]

Attn: SA [redacted]

From: Charlotte

[redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: [redacted]

[redacted] (S)
[redacted] (S)

Title: [redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

(U) [redacted] (S)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

[redacted] (S)

Synopsis: [redacted] (U)

[redacted] (S)

[redacted]

(U) [redacted] (S)

Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301
Declassify On: 06/03/2036

Administrative: [redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[redacted] (S)

[redacted]

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 06/06/2011

[redacted]

(S)

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Package Copy: (X)

[redacted]

(S)

(U)

[redacted]

Details:

[redacted]

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 06/06/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/06/2011

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(S)

(U) The assistance of the [redacted] in this matter is greatly appreciated.

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (X) [redacted] 06/06/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(X) [redacted]
[redacted] (S)

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Set Lead 2: (Action)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

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(U) (X) Writer requests [redacted] conduct appropriate
examinations. For any questions or clarifications, please
contact SA [redacted]

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

b7E

(U) For information.

Set Lead 4: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) For information.

♦♦

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/07/2011

To: Charlotte

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

(S) From: General Counsel

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Contact: [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

(U) Drafted By: [redacted]

(U) Case ID #: [redacted]

Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

Synopsis: (S) [redacted]

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~~Derived From: Multiple Sources~~
~~Declassify On: 05/17/2036~~

(U) Classification Authority Reference: (S) FBI NSISCG 20090615

Enclosure(s): (S) [redacted]

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Details: (S) [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(U) To: Charlotte

From: General Counsel

Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 06/07/2011

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) READ AND CLEAR

Set Lead 2: (Action)

[redacted]

AT

[redacted]

~~(S)~~

[redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/06/2011

To:

Attn: UC
PM

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Attn: SA

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U)
(U)
(U)

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Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: (U) To request a case and target reorganization.

~~(S)~~ Derived From : ~~FBI NSISGC~~, 20080301
Declassify On: 06/06/2036

b6
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Details: (U) As the Primary Case Coordinator or the Case Agent
of the case listed below, I, SA request that

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

To:

Re: (U)

From: Charlotte
06/06/2011

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

AT

(U) FBI Charlotte requests

b7E

~~(S//NF)~~

Data information

*Old Case ID:

*New Case ID:

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*Move Coordinator or POC: SA

* Required Information

User Information

Those existing

Full Name (First, MI, Last):

Div/Field Office: CE

Trilogy or FBI Net Username:

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

To:

Re: (U)

From: Charlotte

06/06/2011

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Full Name (First, MI, Last):

Div/Field Office: CE

Trilogy or FBI Net Username:

Full Name (First, MI, Last):

Div/Field Office: CE

Trilogy or FBI Net Username:

Full Name (First, MI, Last):

Div/Field Office: CE

Trilogy or FBI Net Username:

◆◆

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

~~SECRET~~

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/05/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA

Attn:

SSA

IA

Attn:

SSA

IA

Attn:

SSA

IA

IA

Attn:

SSA

IA

Charlotte

Attn:

SSA

SA

Attn:

ALAT

From: New York

Contact: Det.

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #:

(U)

(U)

(U)

Title:

~~(S)~~

(S)

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~~SECRET~~

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: [REDACTED] 06/05/2011

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(S) [REDACTED]

(U) ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT- GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED]

(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED]

Synopsis: ~~(S)~~

[REDACTED] (S)

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Derived From: ~~FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
Declassify On: ~~20360605~~

(S)

Reference: ~~(U)~~

[REDACTED]

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Enclosure(s):

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (S)

Administrative: ~~(S)~~

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (S)

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(U)

Details: ~~(S)~~ Background: The FBI

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: [REDACTED] 06/05/2011

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(U) ~~(S//NF)~~ In January 2009, [REDACTED]

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(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] According to intelligence reporting, al-Aulagi

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(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] The FBI assesses that AQAP leaders are

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(S) (U) SAMIR ZAFAR KAHN:

~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN (KHAN), an USPER and the subject of FBI Charlotte [REDACTED], is a 24 year old self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi, and a promoter of the Salafi-Jihadist ideology. Through KHAN's skilled use of the Internet, he is engaging people globally to participate in serving his cause. KHAN attended Masjid Al Mustafa, Islamic Society of Greater Charlotte (ISGC), as well as the Islamic Center of Charlotte (ICC). In April 2009, he became a member of the Dawa Committee for ISGC, but in August 2009, KHAN grew disenchanted with ISGC due to issues with the Imam. A few months later, in October 2009, KHAN made hijra to Sanaa, Yemen. In November/December 2009, KHAN left Sanaa for the Hadramout governorate of Yemen to

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~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: [REDACTED] 06/05/2011

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[REDACTED]

(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] From late 2005 until late 2009, KHAN administered the fundamentalist Islamic, Salafi-Jihadist online blog, revolution.thabaat.net (formerly revolution.muslimpad.com), which is vehemently anti-Western and particularly anti-American. The result of the blog aims at weakening America and the West by any violent means possible, for the sake of establishing an Islamic Caliphate. KHAN promotes the idea that all Muslims worldwide have a religious duty to force non-Muslim governments, government presences (embassies, consulates, corporations, bases, etc.), and the military out of "Muslim lands." KHAN believes that it is a religious duty of all Muslims to either convert, subjugate, or kill all non-Muslims (Jews, Christians, Shia Muslims, etc.), whom he considers kafirs (apostates). KHAN also believes that it is incumbent on all Muslims living in the West (non-Muslim lands) to emigrate (make Hijrah) to the "lands of Jihad" in support of the Mujahideen. If they can not leave the West, then they must find other ways to support the Mujahideen. KHAN believes that any support of the Mujahideen against non-Muslims is a form of jihad, but specifically defines jihad as "to fight - to kill and be killed - for the pure sake of Allah." He states that it is an obligation of every individual Muslim to participate in jihad.

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(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] On his online blog, as well as on several other online forums with similar content, KHAN has expressed a radical Islamic world view. KHAN's blog contained postings that support violent jihad to include links to hundreds of videos that graphically depict the killing of US soldiers in Iraq, suicide attacks on coalition facilities, and speeches by AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI (founder of Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) that merged with al-Qa'ida), and who is considered number two in al-Qa'ida, and USAMA BIN LADEN (leader of al-Qa'ida). KHAN has stated his desire to bring about the Islamic Caliphate and he believes the west is a hypocrisy. He states in his blog, "We will conquer the world with the Qur'aan in one hand and the Gun in the other and we will fight until Islaam is supreme over all lands," and "we want the clash of civilizations. We want the clash of Religions. And it is Islaam that will dominate and crush its opponents."

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(S) ~~(S//NF)~~ [REDACTED] The investigation has shown KHAN becoming increasingly religious and irrevocably radical over time. [REDACTED]

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~~SECRET~~

(S) To: ~~Counterterrorism~~ From: [REDACTED]
Re: [REDACTED] 06/05/2011

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] KHAN is suspected of motivating and recruiting others for jihad and is the creator of the first US-based, English-language, pro-jihad-magazine, known as *Jihad Recollections*. Moreover, individuals close to KHAN have expressed concern that KHAN may become a martyr and he himself has indicated an interest in becoming a martyr. KHAN defines jihad as "to fight - to kill and be killed - for the pure sake of Allah, in order to make His Word the Supreme." KHAN's blog inspires viewers to believe that jihad is not only obligatory upon Muslims, but is also an act of worship. KHAN employs fear and emotional manipulation as tactics by stating that Muslims who do not participate in jihad are in a state of sin, causing religious, but moderate Muslims to question their level of faith and conviction. The significance of this is that some Muslims who are irresolute about their level of commitment may reach a tipping point and turn towards radicalism, urged by feelings of guilt or negligence.

(S)

(U) In summary, KHAN's Salafi-Jihadi ideology envisages a global jihad against non-Muslims that will lead to the re-establishment of the Caliphate. The Caliphate encompasses all Muslim nations (the Ummah) joined into one political entity ruled by a Caliph (successor--God's Shadow on Earth) under a system of Shariah Law. The army of the Caliphate will be comprised of the Mujahideen who will eventually conquer all the nations of the world.

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: [REDACTED] 06/05/2011

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: [redacted] 06/05/2011

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~~SECRET~~

(S) To: ~~Counterterrorism Team~~ [redacted]
Re: [redacted] 06/05/2011

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~~SECRET~~

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [REDACTED]
Re: [REDACTED] 06/05/2011

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) Read and clear

♦♦

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

(S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/14/2011

To:

[Redacted]

Charlotte

Counterterrorism

Attn: SA

[Redacted]

SA

Attn:

[Redacted]

SA

Attn:

[Redacted]

Attn:

[Redacted]

From:

[Redacted]

Contact: SA

[Redacted]

Approved By:

[Redacted]

Drafted By:

[Redacted]

Case ID #:

(S)

(S)

Title:

(S)

[Redacted]

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SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis:

(S//NF)

[Redacted]

(S)

Derived from: FBI NSISCG-20090615

Declassify On: 20360614

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Administrative: (S)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~

[Redacted]

(S)

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(U) To: [redacted]
Re: (S) [redacted] From: [redacted]
06/14/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

[redacted]

b7E

AT [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

For Appropriate Action

Set Lead 2: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT CHARLOTTE, NC

(U) (S) [redacted] Read and Clear

b7E

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

: Read and Clear

b7E

Set Lead 4: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

: Read and clear.

b7E

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S)

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/07/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

IA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

TEO [redacted]

(DOD)

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

Charlotte

SSA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

From: [redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (U)

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Title: (S)

(S)

(S)

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted]

From: [redacted]
06/07/2011

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(U)

~~(S)~~

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

~~(S)~~

[redacted]

(S)

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Synopsis: (U) To open captioned [redacted]
[redacted]

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360607~~

(U)

[redacted]

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Reference: (U)

[redacted]

Administrative: ~~(S)~~

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) **Details:** ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ For background purposes. [redacted]

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10/22/2009

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted]

From: [redacted]
06/07/2011

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted]

From: [redacted]
06/07/2011

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted]

From: [redacted]
06/07/2011

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[redacted] (S)

Descriptive Data:

[redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism
Re: (U) [redacted]

From: [redacted]
06/07/2011

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LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted]

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Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 4: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 5: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) [redacted]

b7E

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/07/2011

Set Lead 6: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

b7E

(U) Read and clear.

Set Lead 7: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT [redacted]

b7E

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG [REDACTED]
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-24-2019

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Automated Serial Permanent Charge-Out
FD-5a (1-5-94)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Date: 07/28/11 Time: 07:36

Case ID: [REDACTED]

Description of Document:

Type : OTHER
Date : 06/21/11
To : CHARLOTTE
From : CHARLOTTE
Topic: [REDACTED] (S)

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Reason for Permanent Charge-Out:

Other

[REDACTED] approval granted 07/28/2011. Deletion requested by SST [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Reason for deletion: The document that was uploaded was the
wrong document & the document had not been approved by the supervisor.

Employee: [REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

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CLASSIFIED BY: NSICG
REASON: 1.4 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: 12-31-2036
DATE: 04-16-2019

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/21/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA

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From: Charlotte

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #: (U)

Title: ~~(S)~~ SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis: ~~(S)~~

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Derived From: FBI NSISGC, 20080301
Declassify On: 06/21/2036

Administrative: ~~(S)~~/~~NA~~

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~

To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/21/2011

(S) Details:

CASE BACKGROUND

(S//NF) [redacted] In late 2006, Samir Khan (born in 1985) came to the attention of the FBI for his role in administering a fundamentalist Islamic, pro-jihad, online blog from [redacted] in Charlotte, NC. On this online blog, as well as on several other online blogs, forums, and web sites with similar content, Khan expressed a radical Islamic worldview. Khan's popular online blog, which he operated from 2005 until 2009, gained him international attention in 2007. From early 2007 until late 2009, investigation of Khan revealed that this self-proclaimed Salafi-Jihadi became increasingly religious and radical over time. Major discoveries of the investigation include: [redacted]

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[redacted] Khan became a radicalizing influence on others, possibly motivating/recruiting them for jihad; individuals close to Khan expressed concern that Khan may become a martyr, and he himself indicated an interest in becoming a martyr; Khan created the first US-based, English language, pro-jihad magazine, known as "Jihad Recollections," which published four issues online and received significant international attention; and in October 2009, Khan traveled to Yemen, apparently to make hijra.

(S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/OFCON~~ [redacted]

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/21/2011

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(U) Although not charged with a crime, Khan is

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~~SECRET//NOFORN/OFCON~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/21/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~/~~ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Charlotte From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/21/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

b7E

(U) Read and clear.

♦♦

~~SECRET//NOFORN//ORCON~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/23/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn:

SSA
TA

SSA

SSA
SOS

SA

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✓ Charlotte

Attn:

Attn:

From:

Contact: SA

Approved By:

Drafted By:

Case ID #:

Title:

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

Synopsis:

Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301
Declassify On: 20360606

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (S) [redacted] 06/23/2011

Reference: ~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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Administrative: ~~(S)~~ [redacted]

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Details: ~~(S)~~/~~TF~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 06/23/2011

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[redacted]

(S)

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Results: ~~(S)~~//~~FOUO~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (S) [redacted] 06/23/2011

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(S//FOUO)

[redacted]

[redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: ~~(S)~~ [redacted] 06/23/2011

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

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(S)

Set Lead 2: (Info)

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) For information purposes.

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 07/06/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

IA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

TFO [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

SSA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

SA [redacted]

IA [redacted]

Attn: [redacted]

TFO [redacted]

Charlotte

From: [redacted]

Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]

Case ID #: (S) (U)

Title: (S) (U)

SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN

Synopsis: (S) (U)

Derived From: FBI NSISCG-20080301

Declassify On: 20360706

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (U) [redacted] 07/06/2011

(U) [redacted]

b7E

Administrative: WARNING: ~~TS~~ [redacted]

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Details: (S) [redacted]

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(S) [redacted]

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[redacted] Samir Khan (S)

[redacted], a self-avowed Islamic extremist
currently [redacted]

Moreover, Samir Khan is considered to have attained a high position within Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) since his arrival in Yemen in October, 2009. Prior to that date, beginning in the fall, 2005, Samir Khan actively, and openly, operated several web-sites that espoused Islamic extremist ideology from his home in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (X) [redacted] 07/06/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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(S) To: Counterterrorism From: [redacted]
Re: (U) [redacted] 07/06/2011

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 2: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 3: (Info)

COUNTERTERRORISM

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 4: (Info)

CHARLOTTE

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

b7E

Set Lead 5: (Info)

[redacted]

AT [redacted]

(U) Read and clear.

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 06/30/2011

To: Counterterrorism

Attn: SSA [REDACTED]
SOS [REDACTED]

Charlotte

SA [REDACTED]
IA [REDACTED]
TFO [REDACTED]

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SA [REDACTED]
SA [REDACTED]

SA [REDACTED]
IA [REDACTED]

SA [REDACTED]

From: Charlotte

Contact: SOS [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

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Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: (U)
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(U)
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[REDACTED] (S)

Title: (S) SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

(S)

[REDACTED] (S)

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(U)

(S)

ANWAR NASSER AULAQI

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [REDACTED] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

CT - SUNNI EXTREMISM - MIDDLE EAST

Synopsis: (U) Summary and analysis of *Inspire* Winter 1431/2010 and *Inspire* Spring 1431/2011, an online magazine produced by al-Qa'ida Organization in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and highlight of Samir Khan's potential involvement in the magazine.

~~Derived From : FBI NSISCG-20080301~~
~~Declassify On: 20360630~~

Reference: (U)

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Administrative: ~~(U//FOUO)~~

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Enclosures: (X)

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Details: ~~(S//NF)~~

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

[Large redacted area containing several 'X' marks]

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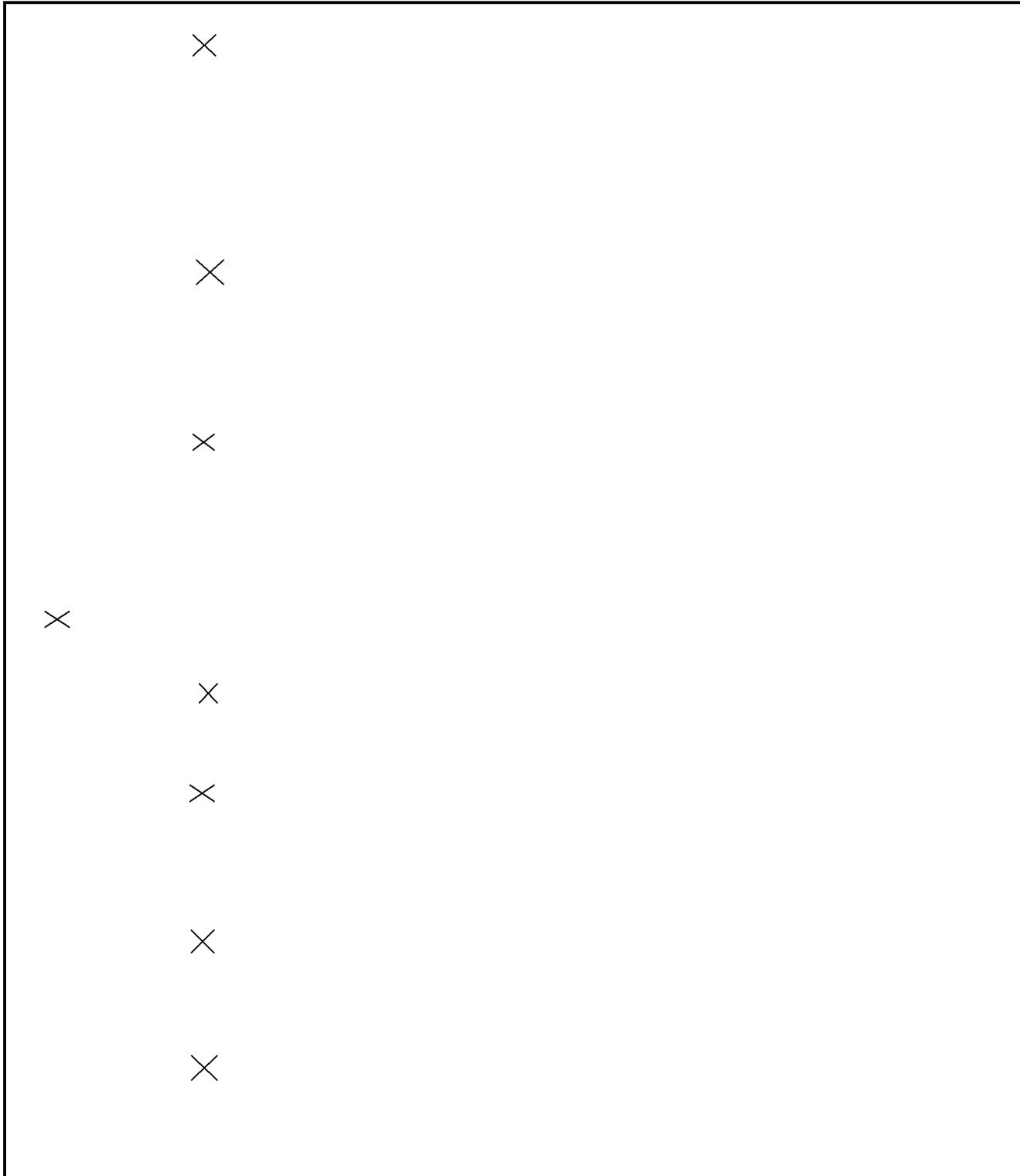
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011



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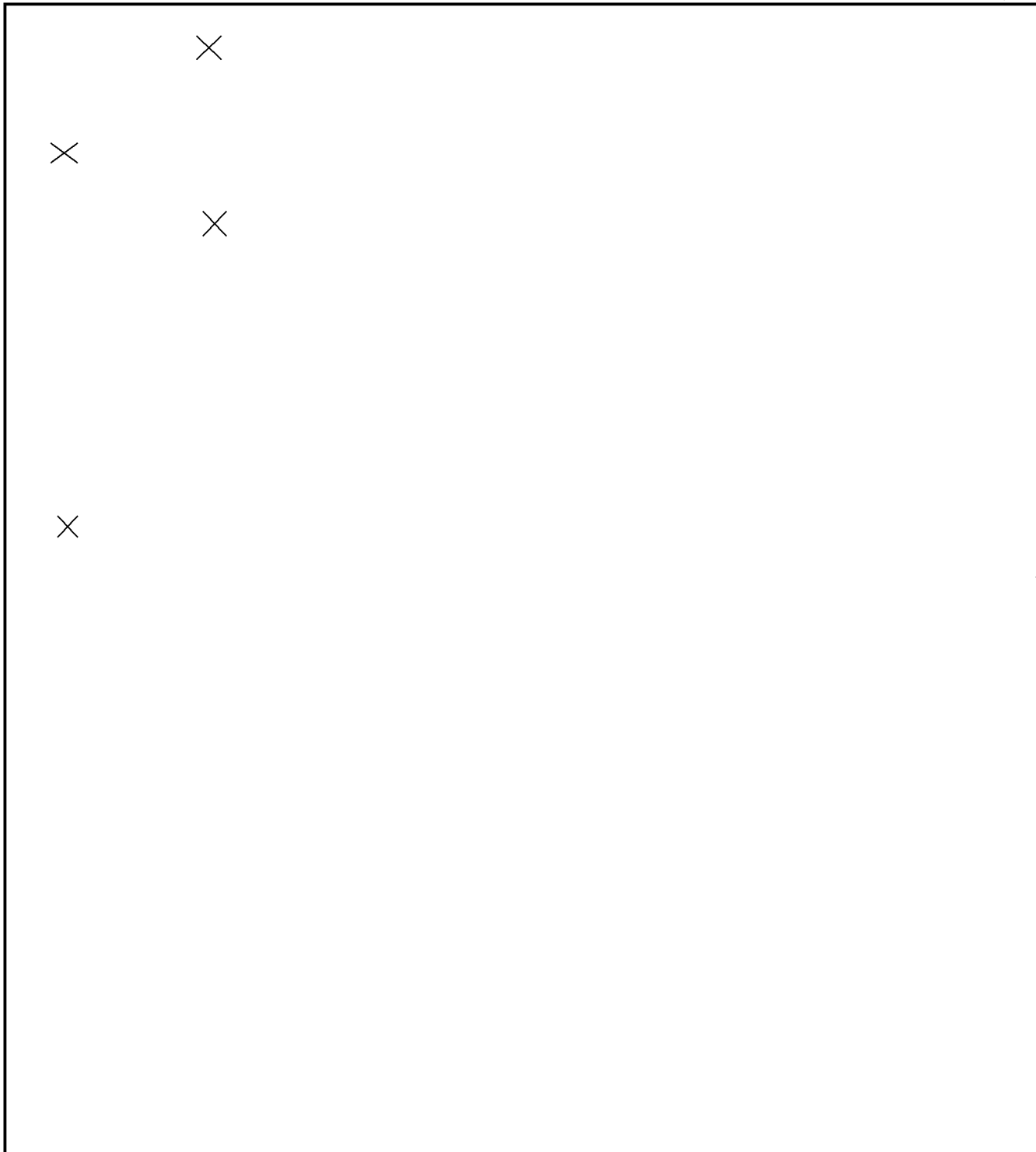
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011



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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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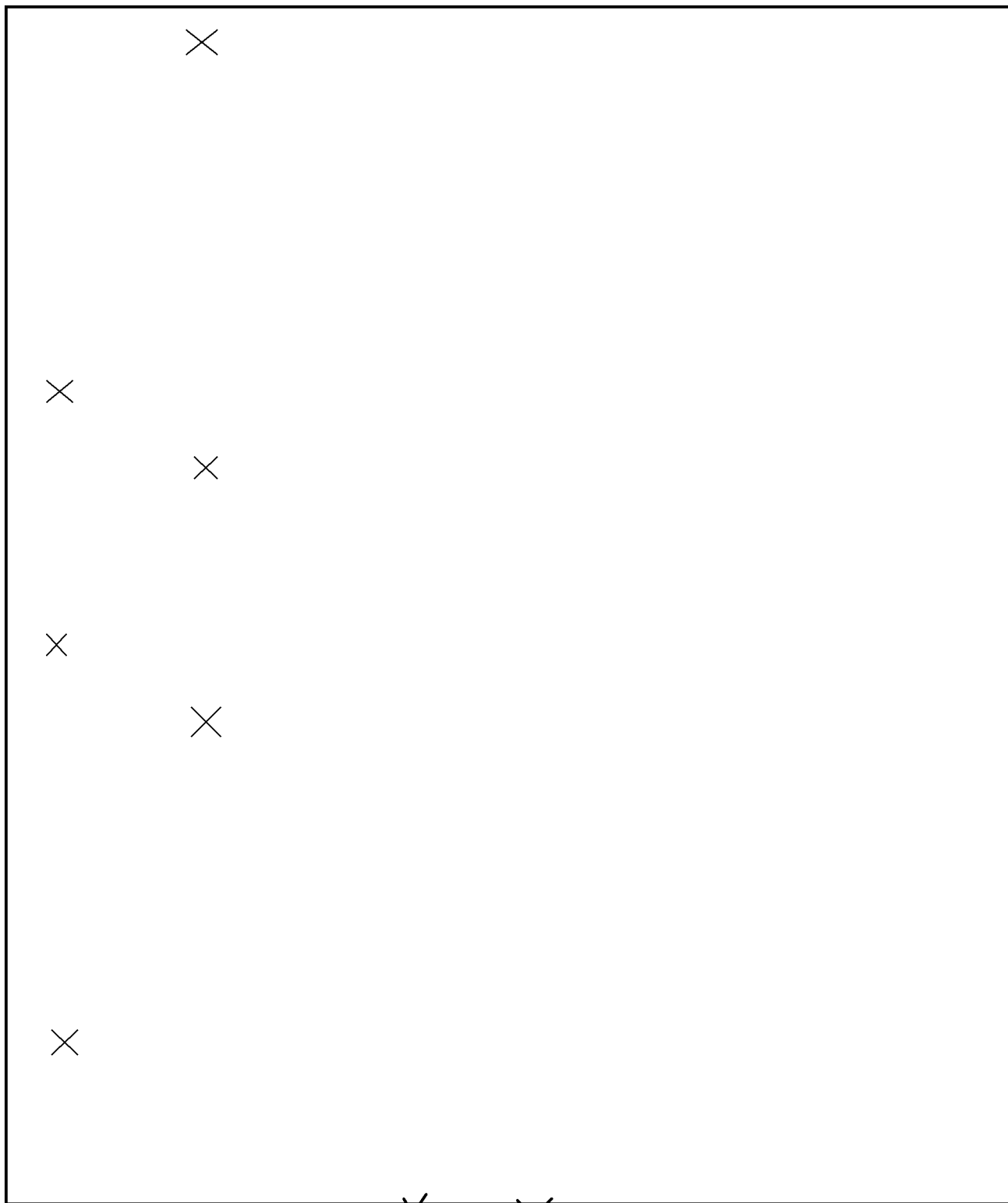
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011



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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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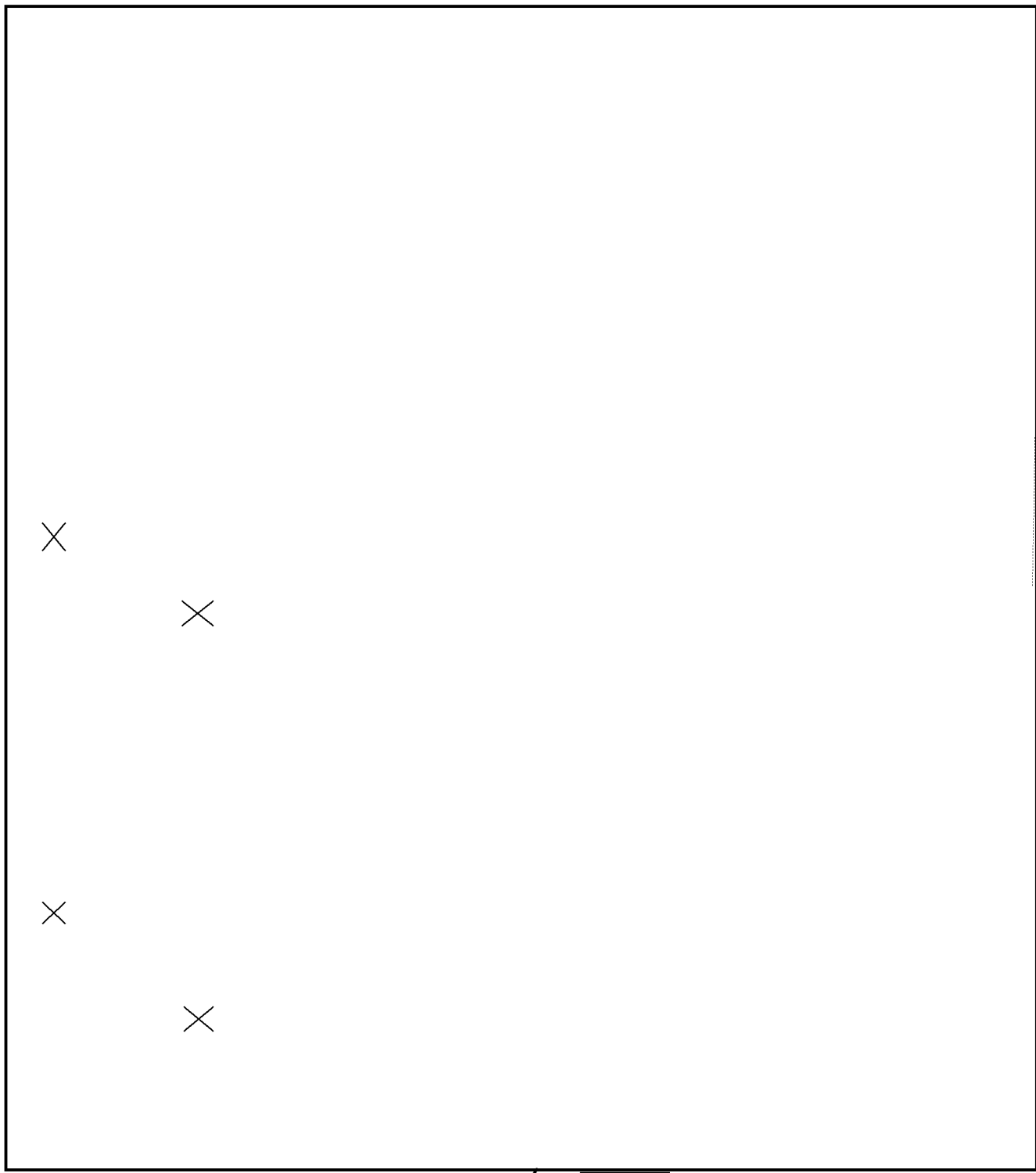
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

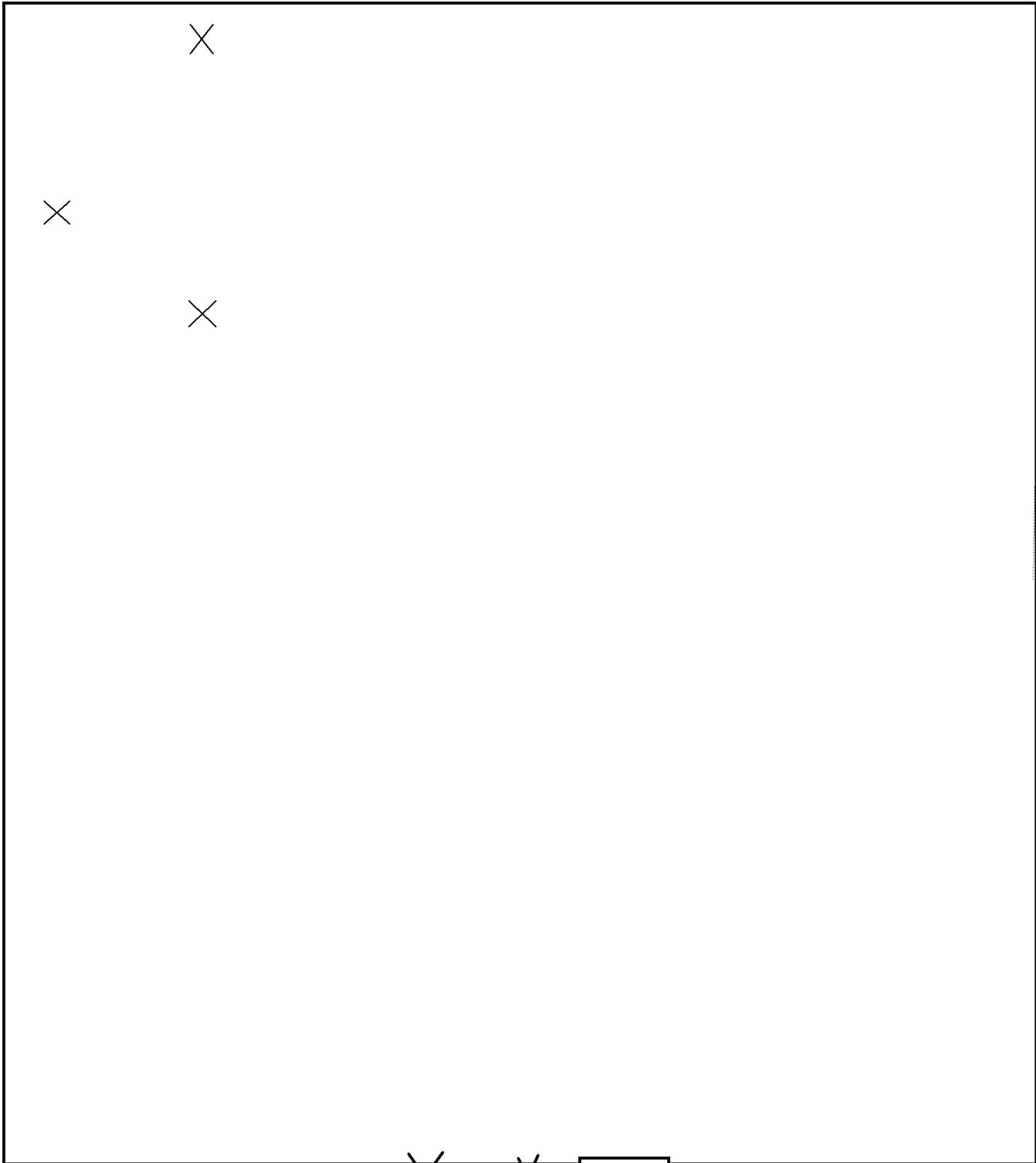
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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011



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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~



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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U)  06/30/2011



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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~



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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

[redacted] (S)

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[redacted]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

[Large redacted area]

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

[Large redacted area containing multiple 'X' marks]

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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[redacted]

~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted], 06/30/2011

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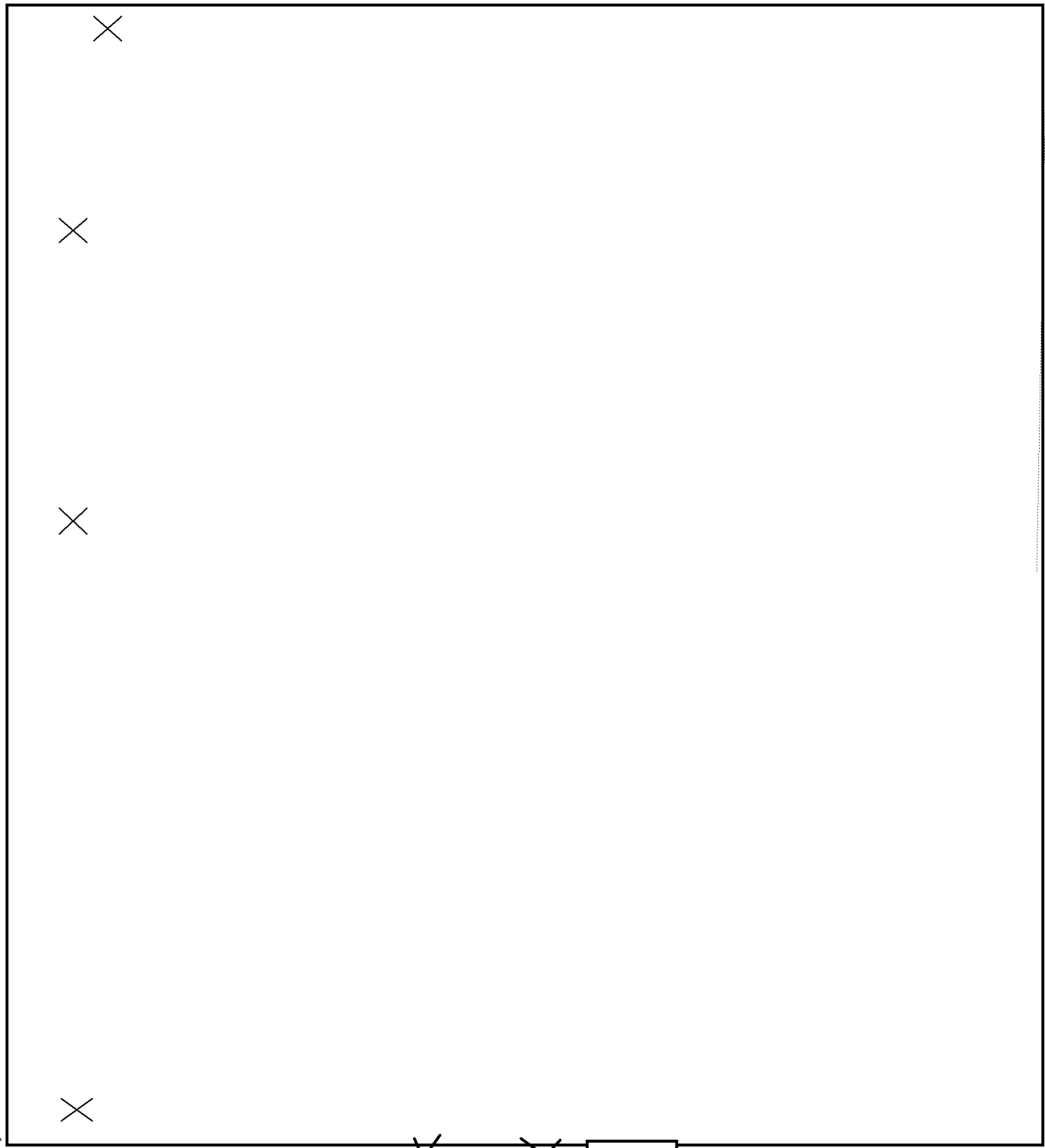
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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011



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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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~~SECRET~~//~~NOFORN~~ [redacted] (S)

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To: Counterterrorism From: Charlotte
Re: (U) [redacted] 06/30/2011

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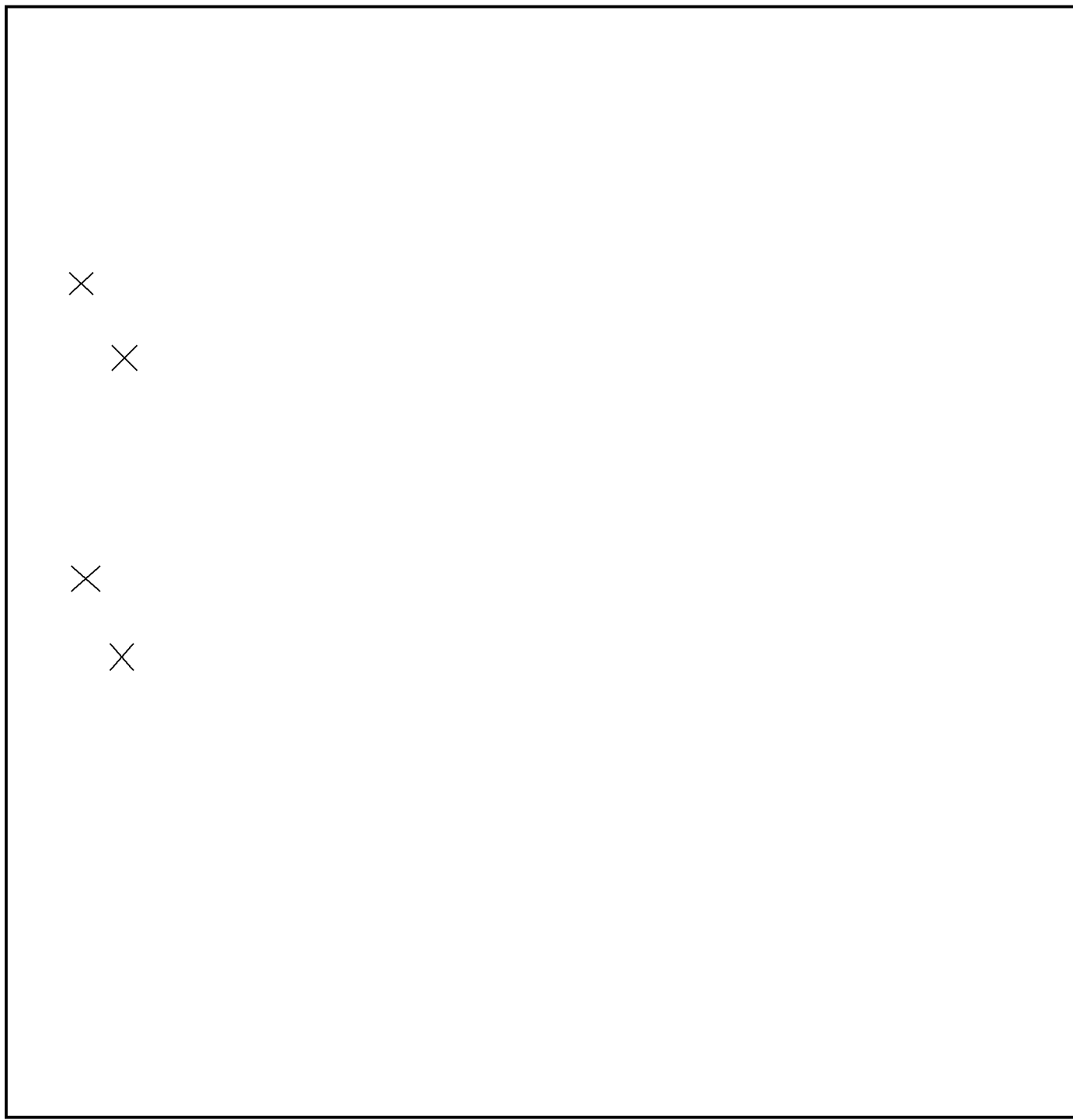
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AT CHARLOTTE, NC

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: PRIORITY

Date: 07/07/2011

To: Counterterrorism

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International Operations

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Charlotte

From: Charlotte

Contact: SA [REDACTED]

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

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SAMIR ZAFAR KHAN
CT - GLOBAL EXTREMIST INSPIRED

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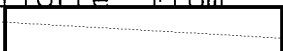
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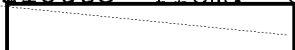
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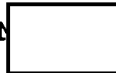
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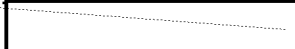
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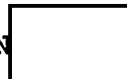
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AT CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

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The Seduction of Simple Solutions

Gregory Johnsen on June 30, 2011, 12:47 PM

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Late last week Frank Cilluffo and Clint Watts released a policy brief from George Washington University's Homeland Security Policy Institute entitled "Yemen and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula: Exploiting a Window of Counterterrorism Opportunity."

My in-box quickly filled up with helpful people sending me copies of the report, I have now had time to read it and digest and my thoughts follow below.

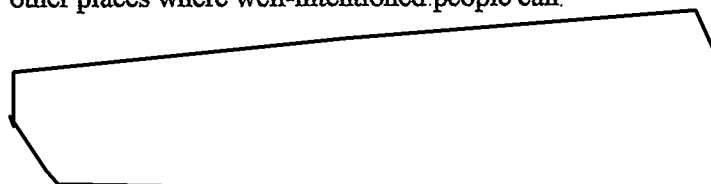
(Note:) I don't know Frank Cilluffo but I do know and respect Clint and he has seen a copy of my rebuttal here prior to posting.

For those who are faithful readers of Waq al-waq it should come as no surprise that I strongly disagree with the report and its conclusions. I think this is what happens when smart people tackle a complex problem in an environment they don't know particularly well. The report, in my opinion, is full of assumptions that make sense broadly but break down the closer one gets to Yemen.

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Obviously there are parts of the report I agree with, and many other places where well-intentioned people can disagree.

<http://bigthink.com/ideas/39095>



(Quotes from the paper are in italics; mine are in regular caps.)

Assumption 1: AQAP suddenly stronger this month

"This week's escape of 63 suspected al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) fighters from a Yemeni prison exemplifies how President Saleh's departure to Saudi Arabia and Yemeni instability embolden this lethal al Qaeda affiliate."

I'm pretty sure that AQAP was emboldened prior to Salih's departure, the group has been incredibly active in Yemen recently and I would argue that largely as a result of US air strikes between December 2009 and May 2010, the organization is actually stronger now in terms of recruits than it was when it dispatched the so-called underwear bomber who tried to bring down the airplane over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009.

Assumption 2: Huthis and Southern Movement are responsible

"In recent weeks, the writ of government in Yemen has evaporated under the twin strains of the Houthi rebellion in northern Yemen and the Secessionist movement in southern Yemen."

This is simply untrue – the writ of Yemen's government has evaporated under popular protests. The Huthi rebellion has been ongoing since 2004 and the Southern movement since 2007 – neither of these are new, and neither of these are the cause of the recent collapse.

Assumption 3: The Foreign Operations Unit

"For the U.S., AQAP's Foreign Operations Unit is of greatest concern. The unit was described by Dr. Thomas Hegghammer as a small cell, "which specializes in international operations and keeps a certain distance to the rest of the organization."

Anwar al-Awlaki, an American born cleric, allegedly leads this group, steadily morphing his role from an Internet ideologue to full-blown operational planner. Awlaki's online sermons, recruitment of U.S.-based Americans and production of AQAP's English-language jihadi magazine Inspire with Samir Khan (another American AQAP member) have inspired lone wolf attacks on Americans. Ibrahim Hassan Asiri, AQAP's talented bomb maker, transforms the Foreign Operations Unit's threats into sophisticated attacks.

Asiri and his well-trained bombmaking protégés have demonstrated their capabilities repeatedly by devising undetectable devices that nearly killed Saudi Deputy Interior Minister Prince Mohammed bin Nayef in 2009, almost brought down an airliner over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009, and halted air cargo shipments from Yemen in 2010. The Foreign Operations Unit's special knowledge of the U.S. and unique destructive capabilities make AQAP an immediate threat to the U.S."

This theory was put forward by the very smart Thomas Hegghammer, but it is just that: a theory. We're not certain if such an operations unit exists and in fact much of what we know about AQAP's operations suggests that this theory doesn't hold any water. AQAP has written time and again that it seeks to attack targets in Yemen, the region, and the west.

For example, the 2009 attempted assassination of Muhammad bin Nayif, Saudi Arabia's deputy Ministry of the Interior was planned in Marib by Qasim al-Raymi and Ibrahim Asiri. In many ways this plot prefigured the Dec. 2009 attack – same explosives, same bomb maker and same basic set (bomb in rectum and/or underwear).

We also know that Asiri's fingerprint was on one of the 2010 parcel bombs, but – and here is the kicker – the major players involved in this attack are also actively involved in domestic operations in Yemen. It would also stretch the imagination to believe that al-Raymi, AQAP's head military commander, would be taking orders from Anwar al-Awlaki, who Hegghammer regards as the head of the Foreign Operations Unit.

A closer reading of the available sources suggests that the AQAP brain trust is active – as they claim to be – on the domestic, regional, and international fronts.

Thomas may very well be right about the Foreign Operations Unit - he is after all a very smart guy. But the evidence we have suggests otherwise.

Assumption 4: AQAP and al-Shabab

"Moreover, AQAP acts as a critical conduit for regional AQ activities linking al Shabab and other East Africa-based AQ operatives with sustained resources and foreign fighters- some of whom were recruited from Europe and North America."

Al Shabab's consolidation of power, leadership, homicide/suicide bombing tactics and targets are likely indicative of AQAP's regional influence. Perhaps most troubling is Al Shabab's growing international ambitions as evidenced by recent attacks in Kenya and Uganda and complete alignment of their goals with those of Al Qaeda's."

The links between AQAP and al-Shabab are not well documented - there is a lot more that we don't know than there is that we know. I'm uncomfortable at how seamlessly the report jumps from AQAP to al-Shabab, dangerously conflating the two as closely allied groups - I haven't seen evidence to support this reading.

Assumption 5: It Is the Terrorists We Know

"Elimination of key AQAP members, especially those in the Foreign Operations Unit, would immediately increase U.S. security. Removal of Wahayshi, al-Shihri, Awlaki, Asiri or any other key AQAP leaders could short-circuit AQAP's operational capability and disrupt their regional coordination of AQ efforts. As Dr. Hegghammer noted, "AQ in Yemen is short on this type of human capital," suggesting targeted leadership decapitation would seriously weaken AQAP's proven international terrorism capability."

I'm certainly in favor of eliminating people like Wihayshi, Shihri and Asiri - but here is the problem: the US does not have a good record of hitting what it aims at in Yemen. It has missed Awlaki numerous times, and the same goes for Wihayshi and Raymi - and these strikes, as I've said before, don't happen in a vacuum. The dead women, children and innocent civilians are, I believe, at least partially responsible for the influx of recruits AQAP has benefitted from in 2010 and 2011.

There is also an underlying assumption here that our knowledge of AQAP is more complete than it actually is. The US has been down this road before. After the 2006 prison break, the US was most worried about Jamal al-Badawi and Jabir al-Banna. But, of course, as we all now know it was actually Nasir al-Wihayshi and Qasim al-Raymi that were the most dangerous escapees.

The idea that we can kill these leaders and they won't be replaced is a tempting one, but not one that history supports. The US killed Harithi in 2002 and the organization crumbled - it has learned since, which is why the regional leaders the US killed last year have all been replaced.

Assumption 6: Limited Consequence to Bombing

"For the first time, the U.S. can pursue AQAP targets in Yemen without being embroiled in Yemeni government politics and trapped in Yemen's dual insurgencies."

The idea that the US can drop bombs on a country and not become involved in its internal politics is, I believe, a dangerously mistaken idea. There will be consequences to US actions, particularly when the US misses - and it will miss.

I've talked myself blue in the face, arguing that AQAP has been making an argument that Yemen is no different from Iraq or Afghanistan, and that just like those two countries Yemen is under western military attack. This is important because if AQAP is successful in this argument than many more Yemenis will be willing to fight.

Why do you think more Yemenis went abroad to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan than are fighting at home? The answer is because many still don't see Yemen as a legitimate theater of jihad. The more bombs the US drops - the easier it is for AQAP to make this argument and the wider the war gets. I'm particularly worried that

The question I've been pondering lately is this: If the Obama administration is using the 2001 AUMF to justify its air strikes in Yemen, what happens if Ansar al-Shariah or any of the other militant groups around Zanjubar and elsewhere turn out not to be AQ?

Does the AUMF still apply?


Adm. McRaven's testimony as interpreted by Lawfare seems to suggest that there is a difference between AQ, the Taliban and other groups. So if the militants in the south aren't AQ are US strikes illegal? If not, what authority is the US using?

Conclusion:

Cilluffo and Watts have provided one possible way for the US to go in Yemen. I think that way is a mistake that won't yield the results the US wants to see in Yemen.

The bottom line is this: the US has tried this before in Yemen and it hasn't worked. It only made the problem worse. Doubling-down on a failed strategy is only going to get it more of the same.

Still, one of the criticism academics like myself often come up against is that we provide an analysis of the situation without giving direction on a better way forward – I hope to correct this in an upcoming paper. Stay tuned.

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[shawn disney](#) on June 30, 2011, 3:41 PM

This doesn't sound any different from any other "guerilla" war. Those who take on the role of "Imperialist" frequently by necessity find themselves obliged to assassinate ordinary people. (Even Militias are usually made up of ordinary people) The "successes" almost never make up for the basic hatred provoked; it becomes "us against them" until the foreigners leave. Can anyone point to any examples of when this scheme worked? I've heard Malaya, but there were significant minority issues there. Or Vietnam, but there just weren't enough Catholics to "win". Our own Revolution was like that, too; it hardly mattered about winning battles, as long as we did not give up. And of course, evolution usually means the enemy gets better and better.

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HSPI Issue Brief Series

YEMEN AND AL QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA: EXPLOITING A WINDOW OF COUNTERTERRORISM OPPORTUNITY

HSPI Issue Brief 11

June 24, 2011

Frank J. Cilluffo & Clinton Watts

This week's escape of 63 suspected al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) fighters from a Yemeni prison exemplifies how President Saleh's departure to Saudi Arabia and Yemeni instability embolden this lethal al Qaeda affiliate.¹ In recent weeks, the writ of government in Yemen has evaporated under the twin strains of the Houthi rebellion in northern Yemen and the Secessionist movement in southern Yemen. AQAP leaped into the security vacuum created by Yemen's political volatility. As the Yemeni military consolidates its strength in an attempt to maintain state control and fight twin insurgencies, AQAP has further expanded its safe haven in the country's interior, further increasing their operational capacity.



Photo Credit: Al-Jazeera English

AQAP's ascension in the wake of the Yemeni government collapse again illustrates the dangers of un- and under-governed states as terrorist sanctuaries. As seen in Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, the Sahel and many other places, al Qaeda exploits underlying conditions in these safe havens to plan, train and

execute global terrorist attacks. Thus the question becomes this: how does the U.S. counter AQAP amidst pending state failure in Yemen?

Surprisingly, Yemeni unrest provides U.S. counterterrorism efforts a unique opportunity to interdict and significantly reduce AQAP. AQAP's proven capability and their intent to strike the U.S. homeland, those of our allies, and our interests in the region, coupled with Yemen's shift from under- to un-governed territory and the

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collapsing of the Saleh regime all suggest that an immediate escalation in drone operations and targeted Special Operations Force missions could rapidly mitigate the threat posed by AQAP.

AQAP- Determined, Capable, and Growing AQ Affiliate

AQAP is the only al Qaeda affiliate to attempt multiple high profile attempts against the U.S. mainland since 2001, nearly succeeding in its 2009 Christmas Day airliner bomb plot and paralyzing the air cargo industry in 2010 through the use of sophisticated bombs embedded in computer printers. AQAP's potency arises from its hybrid organizational structure uniting long-time veterans of al Qaeda with the most talented members of its new generation. Nasir al Wahayshi, a former personal secretary to Bin Laden, and Said al-Shihri, a Guantanamo detainee released in 2007, lead AQAP. These two jihadists combine long established ties to al Qaeda's senior leadership in Pakistan and a sustained penchant for attacking American targets.

For the U.S., AQAP's Foreign Operations Unit is of greatest concern. The unit was described by Dr. Thomas Hegghammer as a small cell, "which specializes in international operations and keeps a certain distance to the rest of the organization."² Anwar al-Awlaki, an American born cleric, allegedly leads this group, steadily morphing his role from an Internet ideologue to full-blown operational planner. Awlaki's online sermons, recruitment of U.S.-based Americans and production of AQAP's English-language jihadi magazine *Inspire* with Samir Khan (another American AQAP member) have inspired lone wolf attacks on Americans. Ibrahim Hassan Asiri, AQAP's talented bomb maker, transforms the Foreign Operations Unit's threats into sophisticated attacks. Asiri and his well-trained bombmaking protégés have demonstrated their capabilities repeatedly by devising undetectable devices that nearly killed Saudi Deputy Interior Minister Prince Mohammed bin Nayef in 2009, almost brought down an airliner over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009, and halted air cargo shipments from Yemen in 2010.³ The Foreign Operations Unit's special knowledge of the U.S. and unique destructive capabilities make AQAP an immediate threat to the U.S.

AQAP appears well positioned to sustain and grow al Qaeda's influence regionally and globally. AQAP's Saudi leadership and Middle East proximity will likely garner increased donations from wealthy Gulf contributors looking for a new cause after Bin Laden's death. Moreover, AQAP acts as a critical conduit for regional AQ activities linking al Shabab and other East Africa-based AQ operatives with sustained resources

and foreign fighters- some of whom were recruited from Europe and North America. Al Shabab's consolidation of power, leadership, homicide/suicide bombing tactics and targets are likely indicative of AQAP's regional influence. Perhaps most troubling is Al Shabab's growing international ambitions as evidenced by recent attacks in Kenya and Uganda and complete alignment of their goals with those of Al Qaeda's.

Elimination of key AQAP members, especially those in the Foreign Operations Unit, would immediately increase U.S. security. Removal of Wahayshi, al-Shihri, Awlaki, Asiri or any other key AQAP leaders could short-circuit AQAP's operational capability and disrupt their regional coordination of AQ efforts. As Dr. Hegghammer noted, "AQ in Yemen is short on this type of human capital," suggesting targeted leadership decapitation would seriously weaken AQAP's proven international terrorism capability.⁴

Yemen's shift from under- to un-governed state: an opportunity to mitigate AQAP's immediate threat

The U.S. must act to counter AQAP now. Pursuing the status quo, by waiting for the Yemeni governance situation to solidify and then build a strategy through a weak host-nation partner, provides AQAP an exceptional amount of time to plan, prepare and execute an attack on the U.S. -- an attack likely accelerated by the opportunity to rise in stature after Bin Laden's death.

Yemen's under-governed regions have provided al Qaeda operatives safe haven for more than a decade. Weak, under-governed states, in many ways, prove more vexing from a counterterrorism perspective than failed, un-governed states. While failed (un-governed) states provide al Qaeda safe haven, weak (under-governed) state sovereignty restricts and usually distorts U.S. counterterrorism options. Yemen's persistent under-governance has provided AQAP safe haven and created significant operational constraints on the U.S.

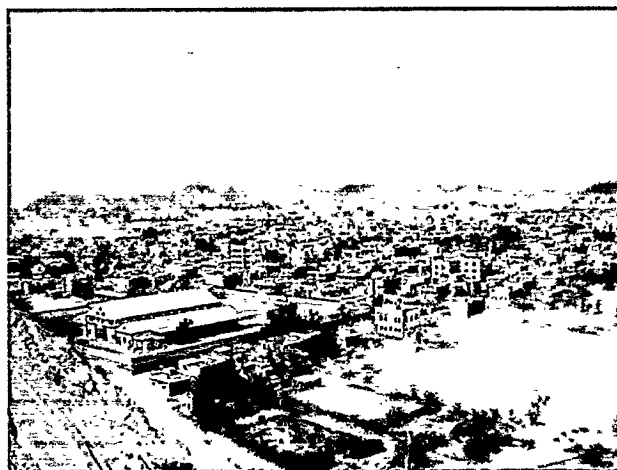


Photo Credit: AFP

U.S. counterterrorism funding and support through President Saleh's regime often had the effect of exacerbating rather than ameliorating the threat of AQAP. Saleh

predominantly used U.S. counterterrorism funding to expand his military capability and counter the Houthi and Secessionist insurgencies in his country while lightly pursuing AQAP. Saleh's strategy, supported by American dollars, created two adverse consequences. First, Yemenis saw U.S. aid to the Saleh regime as America supporting a corrupt regime against an oppressed people, further enhancing Yemeni popular support for AQAP vis-à-vis the U.S. Second, counterterrorism aid and military support actually encouraged Saleh's regime to maintain a persistent low level of AQAP activity in Yemen to justify sustained U.S. counterterrorism funding.

Saleh's removal presents the U.S. with a unique opportunity to target AQAP. Saleh's absence effectively shifts Yemen's AQAP safe haven from an under-governed state to an un-governed status. While the ungoverned security vacuum of Southern Yemen provides AQAP an opportunity to expand and secure its safe haven, this same vacuum also allows the U.S. greater flexibility of counterterrorism options and maneuverability. Yemeni limitations on direct U.S. counterterrorism operations, created by the Saleh regime, are less of an issue today. For the first time, the U.S. can pursue AQAP targets in Yemen without being embroiled in Yemeni government politics and trapped in Yemen's dual insurgencies.

What are the options?

Yemen's current situation makes long-term diplomatic and whole of government strategies entirely infeasible for countering the immediate threat posed by AQAP.

First, arming, training and assisting Yemeni security forces will not adequately address the most clear and present danger facing the U.S. Any financial aid or military support provided through the Yemeni government will undoubtedly be used to quell the country's dual insurgencies. This approach further empowers AQAP's recruitment narrative with the Yemeni populace and solidifies the terrorist group's sanctuary.

Second, diplomatic and other "soft power" strategies to tackle AQAP lack sufficient partners and will be far too slow to prevent AQAP from executing future attacks. The U.S. does not have the needed military security structure, trained Yemeni cultural advisor cadre, or host nation partnerships to implement a Yemeni tribal engagement strategy similar in fashion to those in Iraq and Afghanistan. Tribal engagement strategies take years to mature and provide AQAP significant operational space to execute an attack in the short-term. Additionally, eliminating AQAP leaders through

tribal engagement entices tribes to harbor AQ members. As seen in Afghanistan and Pakistan, tribes realize that slowly bartering AQ operatives while maintaining a low-level of AQ presence will result in sustained resources from the U.S. over time. Tribes know the loss of an AQ presence means the end of U.S. support.

Third, a large-scale military deployment to Yemen is infeasible. Large-scale counterinsurgency operations have proven to be an expensive, time-consuming and indirect approach to eliminating a terrorist organization numbering in the hundreds or thousands. And given that the U.S. already has two wars and a half-dozen uprisings to contend with, a significant commitment of troops and materiel to Yemen is likely not possible.

Fourth, Saudi partners will likely assist in countering AQAP. However, aligning our hopes for disrupting AQAP in the short-term will likely result in counterproductive Saudi alliances hindering long-run options in Yemen.

With none of these options realistic or sufficient, we now consider one that has the most potential for success.

Drones and SOF: Our Best and Only Option

Light-footprint drone and special operations force (SOF) missions specifically focused on short-term tactical counterterrorism objectives can help avoid the long-term quagmire of Yemeni insurgencies while immediately degrading AQAP's ability to strike the U.S. Increasing drones and SOF operations now is the best and only sufficient U.S. option for several reasons. First, AQAP presents an immediate threat to all Americans. AQAP's recent safe haven expansion in Yemen allows for unmitigated attack planning and operational movement. Second, targeted attacks on AQ's leadership in Pakistan severely disrupted the terror group's ability to plan and execute terror attacks abroad. Information recovered from the Bin Laden raid details how drone operations, "frustrated Bin Laden indicating that he could no longer direct terrorist attacks by lieutenants who feared for their own lives."⁵ Third, the fall of the Saleh regime and the lack of a host nation partner provide the U.S. a unique opportunity to



Photo Credit: AFP

increase its security without being constrained by weak state sovereignty. Fourth, as described above, all other available options appear infeasible for eliminating AQAP's immediate threat capability. Fifth, eliminating AQAP's terrorist leadership in the near term through drone and SOF operations allows the U.S. to lay the groundwork and move toward a long-term Yemen strategy unencumbered by the immediate terrorist threat of AQAP.

Maintaining a light footprint

Successfully implementing a drone and SOF approach in Yemen requires a light military footprint accompanied by integrated intelligence and a deliberate information operations campaign. Precisely eliminating AQAP's senior leadership while minimizing civilian casualties requires interagency intelligence assets leading the effort and appropriately transitioning direct military action to SOF as needed. As evidenced in the Bin Laden raid, seamless coordination between these two elements can maximize the effectiveness and minimize the costs of this strategy.⁶ Additionally, the drone and SOF program should utilize a dedicated information campaign consistent with counterinsurgency doctrine signaling to Yemeni tribes that removal of AQAP members from their territories will bring an end to U.S. engagements.

Don't create seams in our fight against a seamless enemy.

Debates over the legality of pursuing AQAP in Yemen through drones and SOF create unnecessary seams in our nation's fight against a seamless terrorist enemy. The threat environment we face today predicates the further synchronization of the military and intelligence community. This evolution in the operational environment demands that the authorities under Title 10 (legal basis for the military services and the department of defense) and Title 50 (procedures for covert actions) be equally synchronized and coordinated. The many corridors inside the Beltway must not stymie operational performance in the field. The U.S. State Department officially designated AQAP a Foreign Terrorist Organization in January 2010 and most of AQAP's leaders are now Specially Designated Global Terrorists under Executive Order.⁷ Under this legal designation, the U.S. should use all available assets to eliminate the immediate threat of AQAP.

Conclusion

Increased use of drone and SOF strike missions is not without risks – yet the ratio of possible risks to potential benefits is far better than any other viable option. Leaning

forward and seizing this window of opportunity with such a policy will provide the U.S. time to develop a strong, long-term relationship with Yemen's successor government that addresses the persistent threat of AQAP and jihadi radicalization in the country. Pursuing this approach will also provide the U.S. an additional litmus test for creating a new long-run counterterrorism strategy in a post-bin Laden world. However, the present window of opportunity will close quickly – the U.S. must act now to prevent an inevitable attack from AQAP.

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Founded in 2003, The George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute (HSPI) is a nonpartisan "think and do" tank whose mission is to build bridges between theory and practice to advance homeland security through an interdisciplinary approach. By convening domestic and international policymakers and practitioners at all levels of government, the private and non-profit sectors, and academia, HSPI creates innovative strategies and solutions to current and future threats to the nation. The opinions expressed in this Issue Brief are those of the authors alone. Comments should be directed to hspi@gwu.edu.

¹ Mohammed Hatem, "Yemen Jailbreak by Al-Qaeda Fighters Highlights Risk of Descent Into Chaos." Bloomberg News, June 23, 2011. Available at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-06-22/al-qaeda-fighters-escape-from-yemeni-jail-via-tunnel-after-killing-guard.html>

² Thomas Hegghammer, "The case for chasing al-Awlaki." Foreign Policy. November 24, 2010. Available at: http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/11/24/the_case_for_chasing_al_awlaki

³ Associated Press, "Al-Qaida bomber leaves behind a fingerprint." May 24, 2011. Available at: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110524/ap_on_go_ca_st_pe/us_al_qaida_bomber

⁴ Ibid, Hegghammer

⁵ Mark Landler and Helene Cooper, "Qaeda Woes Fuel Talk of Speeding Afghan Pullback." New York Times, June 18, 2011. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/19/world/asia/19policy.html>

⁶ Frank Cilluffo, "After bin Laden the Threat Remains: Drones, CIA and SOF Still the Only Game in Town." Homeland Security Policy Institute Commentary, May 2, 2011. http://www.gwumc.edu/hspi/policy/commentary022_after_bin_laden.cfm

⁷ U.S. Department of State. "Terrorist Designations of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) Operative Othman Al-Ghamdi." Washington, DC. June 16, 2011. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/06/166288.htm>

Al-Qaeda's Infrastructure in the Arabian Peninsula

From the Point of View of Arab Researchers and Studies

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General

In October and November of 2010, the Arab media quoted studies and statements made by Arab researchers regarding the recent changes in Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). One cannot exclude the possibility that some of the studies and the journalistic coverage is essentially biased and meant to point to a certain weakening and laxity in the organization's activity, while at the same time emphasizing the success of the Arab countries in coping with this infrastructure.

From the portrayal made by the Arab researchers, the following points come up:

- *For tactical reasons, the organization was forced to carry out smaller, cheaper and less spectacular terrorist attacks, due to the pressure put on the organization by security forces in the area. This pressure is expressed in the increased surveillance capabilities and in drying out the organization's financial resources. Following these steps, the organization is on the defensive and carries out small and simple terrorist attacks only to prove that it still exists.*
- *These terrorist attacks are aimed at economic targets and especially oil installations, which are vulnerable due to the difficulty in securing them.*
- *The change in the organization's operational pattern is backed up by an operational doctrine based on religious justifications pertaining to "economic Jihad" whose objective is to wear the enemy down and cause as much economic damage as possible.*
- *The continued pressure on the part of security forces in the area alongside the change in the operational pattern is also accompanied by a change in Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's conduct, expressed in its breaking off from*

the parent organization and the use of small unstable cells, so as to increase their ability to mislead security forces.

- Researchers contend that Al-Qaeda still suffers from an ideological weakness due to the deviation from the religious ideas of the organization's founders, especially regarding the determination of enemies.*
- Al-Qaeda also has some "foreign" involvement, as it receives the aid of foreign, most likely Iranian, intelligence services.*

The Inability to Execute Large-Scale Terrorist Attacks

According to Dr. Anwar Ashqi, Chief of the Middle East Center for Legal and Strategic Studies in Saudi-Arabia, the decision to carry out assassinations and cheap small-scale terrorist attacks is a tactic taken by the organization as a result of the drying up of its financial resources and of the effective action taken by Saudi security services, but it does not signify a change in the organization's strategy of sowing chaos and destruction. Al-Ashqi claims that, in the past, the organization targeted innocent people, but with Saudi-Arabia's advancement in its war on terrorism, Al-Qaeda began focusing its efforts on political assassinations so as to silence the people constituting a source of concern for the organization, such as media professionals, public figures, security officials and philosophers. Al-Ashqi referred to Saudi-Arabia's war on terrorism which includes both propaganda and security activities. With regards to propaganda, he stated, Saudi-Arabia has founded a national dialogue center and the "Intellectual Security" Center, alongside its international propaganda efforts. In the field of security, Saudi forces moved from a defensive stance to an offensive one, with the aim of thwarting terrorist attacks at the preparation stage rather than apprehending terrorists after the attack. This was enabled by developments in

the Saudi security forces' capabilities. As a result, the organization attacks only easy targets solely for the purpose of displaying its presence. According to Al-Ashqi, the organization suffers from severe financial constraints and the terrorist attacks using packages, which cost the organization a mere 4,200\$, are testament to this fact.¹

Al-Ashqi is not alone in pointing this change in the operational pattern seen in Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Alongside the publications from November 2010 on the recent exposure of 19 Al-Qaeda cells in Saudi-Arabia, the Saudi Al-Riyadh newspaper published a statement made by Dr. Khaled Mansour Al-Durais, Supervisor of the Prince Naif Chair for Intellectual Security Studies. Al-Durais pointed out that due to the weakness in Al-Qaeda's infrastructure it is now planning smaller attacks compared to those it carried out before. He likened the organization's operational pattern to the activity of snakes; adapting quickly to changes in their situation and said that the organization is using "a snake's tactic of misdirection" comprised of no movement or any attention-drawing activity and the setting up of traps, deception and fraud.²

The Attrition War Doctrine Using Small-Scale Terrorist Attacks and Attacking Economic Targets

The Al-Arabiya network's website published on November 25th 2010 a summary of a study conducted by the Al-Mijhar Research Center in Dubai, titled "The Attrition Strategy: Al-Qaeda's aim to attack oil and economic targets", claiming that Al-Qaeda is not only waging a military campaign but also an economic war in which it targets oil installations as part of its attrition strategy and that it also

¹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, 29.11.2010: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

² Al-Riyadh, 28.11.2010: <http://www.alriyadh.com/>

carries out many small-scale terrorist attacks to preserve its media presence and to shock countries.

Al-Qaeda also works on establishing a religious Sharia foundation for its new activities as part of what is called "The Economic Jihad Strategy", or as Al-Qaeda in Yemen calls it, "The Attrition Strategy" or "The Thousand Cuts Strategy". The study points to the fact that oil installations are deemed easier to attack and more difficult to defend when compared to other targets, especially when discussing oil pipes and oil tankers and states that Al-Qaeda is well aware of this fact.

The authors of the study noted that Al-Qaeda considers attacking oil pipes as a prolonged war of attrition that will weaken its enemies – both the US and Arab countries. Al-Qaeda's objective via these small-scale attacks is to create media presence and to reassure its supporters by undermining the countries' stability and deterrence. These attacks are based on a conceptual-ideological foundation and constitute part of the "economic Jihad". The authors of the study note that the Al-Qarawi Brigades are focusing on economic and industrial targets in the Gulf's oil industry and are responsible for the terrorist attack against the MV Star on the summer of 2010.

The last part of the study focuses on the possible impact of these terrorist attacks and recommends not to be drawn by Al-Qaeda's threats and its small terrorist attacks whose aim is to undermine security and wear out security forces in order to carry out larger terrorist attacks. The study recommends a number of steps to ensure the safety of oil installations such as the use of non-flammable materials, permanent deployment of fire brigades, development of oil tankers etc.³

³ Al-Arabiya, 25.11.2010: <http://www.alarabiya.net/>

Changes in the Pattern of the Organization - "Nano-Cells"

Dr. Khaled Mansour Al-Durais, Supervisor of the Prince Naif Chair for Intellectual Security Studies, pointed out the organization's use of "nano-cells", i.e. – small cells disconnected from one other.⁴

According to the study conducted at the Al-Mijhar Center, Al-Qaeda's strategy in attacking the oil industry is based on guerrilla doctrines and on small temporary cells, much like the Al-Qarawi Brigades and Al-Qaeda in Yemen and Iraq's operational patterns, following the ideological similarity between Zarqawi and Al-Hukaymah, founder of the Brigades and their ideologue.⁵

The Organization's Ideological Weakness and its Ideological Break-Off From the Parent Organization

Dr. Ali Khashiban, a Saudi researcher specializing in Islamic organizations, told Al-Hayat newspaper that it seems Al-Qaeda in Yemen is isolated from the parent organization in Afghanistan and pointed out that Saudi-Arabia is now facing a new Al-Qaeda generation, entirely different from the first generation in that the ideas it embraces in Yemen do not coincide with Bin Laden's ideas and those of his deputy, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, especially regarding the determination of the primary enemies.

According to Al-Khashiban: "The discourse of Al-Qaeda in Yemen is purely political and is not a discourse stemming from religious ideas as is the case in the parent organization and is currently directed at the political and security leadership with the aim of attacking the social and political security". Al-Khashiban mentions that Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan is operating in Europe and the

⁴ Al-Riyadh, 28.11.2010: <http://www.alriyadh.com/>

⁵ Al-Arabiya, 25.11.2010: <http://www.alarabiya.net/>

United States, while its branch in Yemen has broken off from the parent organization.⁶

Muhammad Faiz Farhat, a researcher at the Egyptian "Ahram" Center, also claims that Al-Qaeda's discourse has disintegrated, losing its zeal and consistency. Although Farhat discusses Al-Qaeda in general and not Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, he nonetheless makes the same point. Farhat contends that Al-Qaeda has declared a Jihad war on what it called "the prime enemy", meaning the Jews and the Crusaders. However, in practice, most of Al-Qaeda's efforts are not focused on the external enemy that constitutes its main objective, against which Al-Qaeda claims to be fighting. Other than Afghanistan and Iraq, where American and Western forces are currently deployed, there is no clear presence of American or Western "enemies" and Al-Qaeda's activity in south-east Asia, Yemen and Somalia is an example of the change the organization has undergone; from carrying out Jihad against "the external enemy" to carrying out Jihad against "the internal enemy".⁷

A study conducted by the Al-Mijhar Center also focuses on the ideological weakness the organization is suffering. The title of the first part of the study is "Al-Qaeda's economic Jihad notions: the weakness of the religious [component] and the hegemony of the ideological [component]". This part of the study relates to the religious and ideological foundations of the economic attrition war waged by Al-Qaeda and the weakness of Al-Qaeda's religious justifications on the subject.

⁶ Al-Hayat, 7.10.2010: <http://ksa.daralhayat.com/>

⁷ Al-Hayat, 6.11.2010: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

The Involvement of "Foreign" Security Forces

Dr. Ali Khashiban contends that one cannot rule out the possibility that "a hostile Intelligence Force" in the region provides Al-Qaeda with material support, whether directly or indirectly. Al-Khashiban presents a few circumstantial evidence for this involvement and explains that the organization's failed attempt to attack the aircraft used by the emir Muhammad bin Naif, the Deputy Minister of Interior and of Security Affairs, is a result of sensitive security information that reached the organization, which raises the question, alluding to the Intelligence Services of a country in the region, where has this information come from? He pointed to the fact that the organization had enough time to prepare the attack, the SAM 6 missiles and mortars and to fortify itself in houses near the airport in Sana'a.⁸

Summary

These studies depict a picture according to which Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has recently undergone an ideological and organizational transformation as well as transformations in its operational patterns. Studies present the organization as dispersed, detached from the central leadership of the Al-Qaeda parent organization and as a weak organization forced to carry out cheap small-scale terrorist attacks as opposed to the large-scale attacks of the past. Studies further depict the organization as suffering from an ideological weakness due to the absence of a real enemy to fight, as the original enemy the parent organization has declared war on no longer exists. In addition, it has been implied that the organization receives Iranian support.

⁸ Al-Hayat, 7.11.2010: <http://ksa.daralhayat.com/>

One cannot rule out the possibility that these studies are biased with the aim of stressing the weakening of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's infrastructure, while trying to glorify the efficiency and efficacy of regional security forces in dealing with the organization. Furthermore, one should take into account that political elements in the region have a vested interest in pointing out Al-Qaeda's ideological weakness in order to discourage the population from identifying with it. Another interest is to point to a connection between Al-Qaeda and Iran, thus "killing two birds with one stone". Accuse Iran, an adversarial regional power of the Gulf countries in general and Saudi-Arabia in particular, of supporting Al-Qaeda, thus undermining the legitimacy of the Iranian regime on the one hand and on the other, exploiting Sunni-Shiite hostility in order to discourage the local population from joining Al-Qaeda or from identifying with the organization.